

A CULTURALLY CONGRUENT MENTORING MODEL
FOR INNOVATIVE BLACK WOMEN'S
EFFICACY IN LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

A CULTURALLY CONGRUENT MENTORING MODEL FOR INNOVATIVE BLACK WOMEN'S EFFICACY IN LEADERSHIP

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The context is Beyond Boundary Consulting in Nashville, Tennessee. This dissertation addresses how there is regression in effective ministerial leadership in Black women due to culturally incongruent mentorship impeding contextual advancement. The hypothesis is if women are paired with mentors of the same culture, then transformative self-discovery is enhanced. The hypothesis was tested by an ethnographic qualitative research methodology with six women. Data was collected from multiple instruments: questionnaires, participant observation, role play, and one-on-one interviews. The results disclosed clarity of participants' insight into ministry direction, the need for culturally congruent mentorship, and positively demonstrates increased self-efficacy and leadership development.

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I would also like to show gratitude to my Professional Associates, Dr. Patricia Brock, Dr. Jocelyn Briddell, and Dr. Peggy Enochs, and Peer Associates Rev. Marie King, and Rev. Sondrea Tolbert and to my context associate Chaplain/Elder Allyson Young. Their teaching style, constructive criticism, and enthusiasm for the solution to my research problem made a strong impression on me to pursue excellence in training others to be effective leaders. I discussed early versions of mentoring and leadership with each of the professional associates and each uniquely raised many precious points in our discussion, and I hope that I have managed to address several of them here.

It was an honor to have the opportunity to work directly with Dr. Brock, Dr. Briddell, and Dr. Enochs, previously, which further impacted the work of my study throughout this dissertation. I would like to thank my pastor of Born Again Church & Christian Outreach Ministries, Bishop Horace Hockett, who gently reminded me that a Black woman's first culturally congruent model is her mother. This man was never threaten by my God given gift and talents as a woman in ministry.

A thank you is extended to Dr. Andrew Park, who challenged me to write and publish academically; this continues to sustain my pursuit to be published in scholarly journals. I am grateful for my editor, Dr. Kenneth Cummings, and the staff of United Theological Seminary — without their assistance the journey of earning a doctorate would have been turbulent. The semester intensives were academically supportive, spiritually uplifting, and provided insight to progress to the next stage of dissertation completion. The intensive classes prepared me for the semester coursework assignments.

Getting through my dissertation required more than academic support, and I have many, many people to thank for listening to me and, at times, having to tolerate me over the past three years. I cannot begin to express my gratitude and appreciation for their loyalty and friendship.

Most importantly, none of this could have happened without my family, church home support, and donors via scholarships. My sisters offered encouragement through phone calls every week. Every time I was ready to quit, the Lord sent someone to encourage me. . . God did not let me, and I am forever grateful. This dissertation stands as a testament to much unconditional love and encouragement provided by those who walked alongside me.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, the first culturally congruent mentor in my lifecycle. Thank you for every guiding moment and from whom I learned the true meaning of “womanish.” Also, I dedicate this work to the many women in my development who have refined me with strong words of correction, laughter, and wisdom not yet found in books to mentor effectively as a Black woman.

This is an honor of life to accept the torch in leadership. You all have encouraged me to carry and lead with hope to pass the torch on to my sisters in leadership, so that they might acquire sustainability and build capacity in traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership.

“Mentorship is a symbiotic relationship of evolution that is nurtured by life exchanges between the mentor and mentee.”

Karynthia Glasper Phillips

ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	Beyond Boundary Consulting
BT	Black Theology
CBTS	Central Baptist Theological Seminary
CLGPGT	Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and Grown of the Truth, Inc.
EOH	Echoes of Hope, Inc.
ETTA	Evangelical Teachers Training Association
MIT	Ministers in Training
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
PT	Practical Theology
TT	Tri-axis Theology
TWM	Trinity Wholeness Ministries
WP	Weapon Platform
WT	Womanist Theology
YPCL	Young People's Christian League

My goal is to help train the next generation of scholars, particularly women of color scholars, who will go on to be agents of transformation in the academy and broader world.

— Keri Day, “Six Black Women at the Center of Gravity in Theological Education.”

INTRODUCTION

The road traveled to earning my Doctor of Ministry degree was one of many detours. Each detour led to attaining completion of the doctoral degree at United Theological Seminary. The reader should understand in this instance detours are not difficulties or struggles. They were stepping stone of growth spiritually and emotionally toward effectively serving in leadership. Thus, the detours experienced on this journey at United Theological Seminary were times of healthy deconstruction and systematic construction that filled gaps of insecurities, the vagueness of vision, and theological missing links.

The academic setting provided concrete stones of wisdom and knowledge acquired in textbooks, reflective papers, intensives, cohort engagement, and mentorship by faculty and administrative staff. There were six detours — one per semester that bridged my confidence in becoming a stronger academic writer, better leader, and an uprising scholarly thinker.

The nuance of theology – in particular, a womanist perspective – can unfold many discussions in terms of mentorship. Thus, I marvel at the rich value of a Black woman's relationship with the Holy Spirit, self-identity, and theological adoption as necessary artillery for her weapon platform in leadership. During my leadership journey, culturally congruent mentorship-staged dialogues served as ammunition and strategies for building capacity and sustainability as effective leaders. It was at my mother's kitchen table that

the researcher first learned the value of mentorship. Later, as I wrestled with my Blackness and womanist thought, practical and feminist theologies created a form of triple consciousness — as I had not totally agreed solely with womanist theology as each definition indicates. This doctoral thesis and project suggest culturally congruent mentorship as a mixture of the three said theologies to serve as a mirror image for the mentor-mentee ministerial leadership development. The amalgam suggests a triad of theologies which the researcher coins as a Tri-axis Theology which is a perspective of innovation for this project and the perpetuity of Black women in ministerial leadership.

One of the main terms in this dissertation is culturally congruence. Its primary origin of use is in the healthcare setting. The researcher finds it fitting to use the idea to demarcate mentoring women of sameness to enhance relational learning and skill building for leadership.

Cultural consciousness can be defined as developing awareness of culture in self, which can result in expanding understandings of culture and developing deeper cultural knowledge about other individuals and contexts.¹

Cultural congruence in this context can be understood as the set of shared attitudes, values, beliefs, behavioral standards, goals, and practices that characterize an institution, organization, or group. As noted by Geneva Gay, we may not be consciously aware of it, but our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors are determined by culture that in turn influences our teaching and learning practices.²

It is with this definition that the researcher includes the idea in her title for a mentoring model for Black women in leadership. It is the notion that women in a mentoring cohort glean more in these settings having adopted a theology as they rediscover identity,

¹ S. M. Schim and A. Z. Doorenbos, “A Three-dimensional Model of Cultural Congruence: Framework for Intervention,” *J Soc Work End Life Palliative Care* 6, no. 3-4 (2010): 256-270. doi:10.1080/15524256.2010.529023, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3074191/>.

² James A. Banks, “Cultural Consciousness,” in *Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*, ed. James A. Banks (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012), 510, <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452218533.n160>.

practice self-care, and embrace self-validation. Their leadership methods will be enhanced as they learn from others in a culturally congruent setting. It is my hope the reader will see the thread in the chapter summaries of the project.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, became apparent while training women in my context Beyond Boundary Consulting. The usefulness of quality mentoring and training was in my life but not always evident to me on my journey. The nurturing spirit of others increased my passion to train others to be effective. Realization of having been unconventionally mentored enabled me to mentor others as second nature. The discovery was enlivened as more women contacted me to be mentored in leadership. This confirmed the path of my vocation to offer training in traditional and non-traditional leadership.

Listening to the seekers (women) being challenged in their context to answer their call effectively led me on a search for tools with action steps. It was in my search that the missing link to sustainability and capacity building for women in leadership was uncovered. Those attending context workshops and mentorship had not been exposed to effective culturally congruent mentoring — someone who could empathize with them and redirect perspective. Many of them had the same story: “I feel like I am being used.” “My trainer made me her handmaiden.” “If I am a leader like her, why am I treated this way.” The women were looking for hope and professional development, while relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to assist them in leadership. Linda E. Thomas, in her essay, “The Holy Spirit and Black Women,” confirms the struggle Black women experience in their efforts to achieve liberation and thrive as observed in my context via

the Holy Spirit.³ Last, the women in my context lacked self-care strategies to minimize their response to demands of leadership and life. Regular planned time for self-prioritization among Black women can seem selfish considering the many demands on them. “Many Black women leaders have difficulty practicing radical self-care in this manner.”⁴

The model of effective mentorship in my context has become a weapon platform for leveraging effective leadership. The model includes professional development and baseline health assessments of spirit, mind, and body to generate an individual action plan for the whole woman. Discovery of her “why” via gift assessment, personality testing, and journaling were provided to further aid in clarity as we engaged in mirror image conversations. In summary, this section also is a sharing of my life journey and passion for ministry wedded with the context where I live and serve that has led to a synergy of working with women in leadership — traditional and non-traditional capacities.

Chapter two, Biblical Foundations, discloses culturally congruent mentoring between Elizabeth and Mary. The passage Luke 1:26-45 serves as the biblical narrative undergirding this thesis of culturally congruent women mentoring women. The Book of Luke is also revealing in women’s progressive movement during the time of Luke. Elizabeth, and Mary developed a relationship deeper than being cousins — a bond that

³ Linda E. Thomas, “The Holy Spirit and Black Women,” in *Christian Doctrines for Global Gender Justice*, ed. Jenny Daggers and Grace Ji-Sun Kim (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137462220_5.

⁴ Shanta M. Smith, “Why Radical Self-Care Cannot Wait: Strategies for Black Women Leaders NOW,” *Perspectives on Urban Education*, The University of Pennsylvania, 2022, <https://urbanedjournal.gse.upenn.edu/archive/volume-18-issue-1-fall-2020/why-radical-self-care-cannot-wait-strategies-black-women-leaders>.

demonstrated the proclamation of the gospel via the nurturing, training, and development of the forerunner of Christ (John the Baptist) and the savior of the world (the Messiah). Like women today called into ministry, they are excited, hesitant, unsure, and seek guidance from mature women. The two women in this passage celebrated and praised God for his favor to be called. Their unique relationship of ninety days is paramount for a mentoring model. Their hidden questions of how to proceed are the foundation of stagnant Black women in our society. The project is to answer some of those questions through this doctoral thesis to galvanize and help provide a model of support for women in ministry.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, captures the historical figures who portrayed a paradigm shift in mentoring women and men. They innovatively led with strategic supportive pedagogy for self-discovery and clarity of implementation of their mentees' visions. Through the lens of history, this chapter introduces historical figures who intersect the proposed title, hypothesis, and biblical foundation of the project by identifying many of the characteristics of historical figures who were mentored by others. Who are these women? Harriet Tubman and Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate are examined considering their mentoring others. They had cultural leadership styles that spoke by example: courage, conviction, creativity, and collaboration, which are necessary as a mentor.

These iconic figures demonstrated innovations with a unique talent to share wisdom and knowledge to guide others with strength that conquered the challenges that were in various forms of oppression related to economics, race, and gender. These women are also examples of culturally congruent mentorship in both traditional and non-

traditional ministry leadership. These historical figures were not satisfied with personal success alone; each of them mentored other women to fulfill goals and dreams.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, reveals the intersectionality of theological perspectives of the practical, womanist, and feminist schools of theology. This is to demonstrate the paradigm shift of mentorship through the lens of Elizabeth and Mary and to show how it can apply to women in ministerial leadership in the 21st century. Like the mentor-mentee relationship, there is an exchange of teaching wisdom and study. The correlation of theological perspectives, exegetical findings, and historical figures are the building blocks for building the infrastructure of the doctoral project, “A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model For Innovative Black Women’s Efficacy In Leadership.” This requires knowing one’s theology to fulfill the answer to the call.

Chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundations, highlights an exploration of social psychology as a specialty addressing components of humanity’s innate talents to hone the subject’s skill set and enhance practicing lifestyle modifications in ministerial leadership. This selected area of psychology undergirds the project through the lens of a social science discipline. The theory of self-determination was chosen to further contribute to solidifying the hypothesis and solution of the doctoral project. Social psychology, a combination of two disciplines, serves as a foundation that confirms the validity of social needs in terms of learning and implementation in culturally congruent environments. Secondly, there is a need for justifying personality testing when matching mentors and mentees. This ensures a successful exchange in the learning relationship toward growth in leadership. In relation to Black women self-determination, there has been a sustaining force for success. But what does she do with allostatic overload which is a major cause of

medical and mental health conditions? Inadequate mentoring leads to ministerial stagnation of vision and drive resulting in one chasing dreams that never manifest. This chapter demonstrates the importance of equipping leaders via mentorship tools to add fluidity to the mentee's growth as they garner new skills sets to counteract the stressful demands for sustainability in leadership which is paramount to capacity building. The interdisciplinary studies and theory selected prove necessary for discovering self-awareness, skill-building, retraining thinking, and identification of gifts and personality types. This chapter has layers connecting the usage of interdisciplinary subject validating the need of culturally congruent mentoring for Black women. Those layers include the discipline of social psychology and the theory of self-determination.

Chapter six, Project Analysis, outlines the implementation of the project which includes a curriculum of the following data point tools: pre- and post-questionnaires, personality and spiritual assessment, time management and relationship building workshops, and discussions. This leadership development model is coupled with personality and relationship building workshops and homiletic refinement. During the six- weeks period, the mentees realized that they had to be intentional or they would slip back into old habits easily. Results of the pre- and post-questionnaires data analysis shows a 95% attitudinal change in understanding time management. This revelation speaks to the understanding of a task list versus a schedule assignment to ultimate aid in ministry, home life, and self-care planning. There proved to be a self-discovery of vision clarity (100%) that transitioned into those areas. Overall, there was a 100% recognition, implementation, and desire to continue being mentored for situational debriefing and accountability of self-care. The research design was effective in assisting Black women

leaders to realize their value. It also proved helpful to discern the need for Black women to sharpen their skills and develop understanding of their context to ensure leadership efficacy. This section summary is a bridge between the front matter and the project analysis for the reader to gain a bird's eye view of the content to follow. Mentorship is an evolving topic in the Black church that requires more research and observation for enhancing leadership development.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

In this chapter the observed synergism discovered between the spiritual autobiography and the contextual analysis foundational papers disclosed a thread of strengths, deficiencies, and passion in pursuit of destiny. The findings correlate to how my ministry, gifts, and skills relate to the solutions for needs of women in ministry. The outcomes correlate with Black women who serve in ministry and other leadership capacities who are multi-talented — needing a strong model for effective leadership. The following characteristic pattern of multiple spiritual gifts, self-determination, and skills were, and are, visible in my and their leadership journey. During ministry development, if those characteristics were not nurtured, effective leadership was diminished on my journey.

There is no blueprint for mentoring Black women in ministry. There is a need for a prototype in ministerial leadership. A mentoring guide for Black women in leadership, both written and oral format, from the mouth of a Black mentor will provide a template for leaders to lead as mentors. However, in most cases having a consistent mentor is the missing link that connected those characteristics. Synergistic assessment revealed a missing link in the ministry journey — mentorship for effective sustainability and capacity building. This was further clarified with the founding of Echoes of Hope, Inc.

(EOH), a resource for women and their families affected by cancer. EOH is the umbrella for Beyond Boundary Consulting (BBC) which provides leadership, professional development, and personal care ministerial training.

It is essential to describe Echoes of Hope, Inc's (EOH), a 501c3 organization established 2016 in Nashville, Tennessee. The organization is grant funded with two paid staff, a board of directors, and twenty trained female volunteer staff. The structural design of EOH consists of two entities: 1) a cancer care community outreach that provides services directly to families, churches, and civic organizations via education and resources; 2) a non-traditional ministry, Beyond Boundary Consulting (BBC), which provides individual mentoring and coaching to women in various areas of leadership. Thus, BBC sponsors Beyond Boundary Institute to provide professional and personal care courses via workshops throughout the year. The attendance varies between 120- 200 women depending on the event topic. Both entities train women to lead effectively in traditional and non-traditional ministry.

Women who seek consultation and mentorship are ministers from local churches, writers, community organizers, and business owners requesting guidance. The main quest is insight for effective leadership development to ensure sustainability and capacity building. Beyond Boundary Consulting assisted with the birth and development of this doctoral thesis and project: *A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model for Innovative Black Women's Efficacy In Leadership*.

During the synergy emersion, this thesis and ministry project idea was confirmed experientially and from the vantage point of being a mentor and coach for BBC. The proposed idea of mentorship with cultural congruence during some phase of development

of Black women in ministry became clear in contextual praxis. Thus, the culturally congruent model dynamics will prove as a solution for Black women in leadership.

The rationale of selecting BBC as the primary context confirms my realization of the need of mentorship for Black women in ministry; this is not only apparent in the traditional ministry setting but also in non-traditional ministry. The two types of leadership are perfect for this project as it includes non-traditional leaders which are: social entrepreneurs, social justice activists, nonprofit leaders, authors, and business owners in the marketplace. According to the Schwab Foundation, “[S]ocial entrepreneurs share several characteristics to traditional leadership. They achieve large-scale social change; they focus on the social or ecological change while earning money to support the change; and they are innovative when looking for a solution to a social problem.”¹

Serving women since 2006, BBC observed three consistent areas of deficits: lack of identity, poor self-care, and personal validation. The project design will provide resources and a plan based on context workshop curriculum. The pillars for growth are self-identity, self-care, and self-validation. The influence and experience with cultural mentoring as a bi-vocational Black woman corroborates the pragmatism of cultural congruence and supportive learning practices. Therefore, BBC set the stage for many opportunities to replicate the process of mentoring and training other women in effective leadership.

The pillars were determined based upon the challenges women voiced during phone calls, emails, and meetings. Interestingly, some women sought me out privately

¹ Schwabfoundation.org, “Schwab foundation for Social Entrepreneurship,” <https://www.schwabfound.org/>

and almost swore me to secrecy about our meetings. It was difficult to meet everyone, thus workshops, cohorts, and mentorship options were made available with mini grants to absorb the cost so any woman would be able to attend.

Tension developed as I tried to manage more women. They came from various denominations and occupations wanting sisterly professional ministerial development in various capacities. These women sought more than network, both in workshops and individual sessions, and longed for support via external outlets of their context.

The convergence of themes observed in my spiritual autobiography and contextual analysis are foundational to my project as a candidate in the United Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program. The objective throughout this ministry focus is to assimilate theoretical and practical findings and goals of the project premises.

The envisaged model design was drafted through my “reflective lens” of lineage, patterns, and themes discerned. The value of revisiting family history, influencers, spiritual growth, academic and professional growth, and other life experiences gave me appreciation for my current social location. The construction and the implementation of the project occurred with the conversation, instruction, research, and guidance from my contextual associates committee. The theme of the project disclosed the transformative value of quality leadership via mentor-mentee relationships garnered among women in ministry and business. The synergy and conclusion sections unveiled the theme, hypothesis, and implementation of the findings; it also analyzed and identified needs along with opportunities and challenges of my ministerial contexts as observed and experienced in context.

History of Context Development

The contextual analysis revealed challenges in selecting a specific area of ministry for a doctoral project. The choice of emphasis became difficult for two reasons. First, I have served in various capacities of this ministerial context for greater than forty years in my current church. Presently, my leadership roles as a senior elder include ministry to the general body, pastoral care (which includes hospital and shut-in visitation liaison), coordinator of the church volunteer placement staff ministry, intercessory prayer team leader, instructor for congregation bible study, instructor for ministers in training (MIT) program, lead coordinator for Girl Scout Troop #2211, and assistant to our women's ministry director. Second, I am also a social entrepreneur leading a nonprofit organization which empowers women. Similar needs and challenges have been observed among women in both contexts mentioned.

The women in both contexts reported having attempted a mentoring program for ministers, but the program failed because there was no meaningful "follow-through" in terms of consistent communication and relationship building activities involving designated mentors and mentees. Also, mentors follow through with the mentee was an issue on my journey. The spiritual autobiography, contextual analysis, and now ministry focus all reinforced the reality that inadequate leadership and mentoring can hamper ministerial growth, particularly in the case of women ministers.

In 1979, I arrived in Nashville, Tennessee, at the age of sixteen years old to attend Fisk University without any warning that women in ministry were not as welcome as in my home church, English Chapel Unified Freewill Baptist in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

In that same year, I was introduced to my current church home, Born Again Church and Christian Outreach Ministries (BAC) and began serving, developing ministry programs, and leading others.

This context “felt like home” as I was able to do many of the same things I did as a youngster at English Chapel. For example, I was able to design ministry programs. The approach was similar to English Chapel in that whoever perceived an idea for ministry and shared it with the church leadership was usually given authorization to plan and/or implement it. In most instances, this occurred without research or evaluation of strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats — commonly referred to as a SWOT analysis or a context review of current goals and budget. Basically, if the idea “sound and felt good,” we “ran with it” and was allowed to lead the activity. This was the same method of programming in my younger years. This process of implementation of programming was carried into BBC in its early inception.

In creating Beyond Boundary Consulting as a training resource for women, it provided a platform and outlet for application of my many years of experience related to ministry, leadership, and skill building. Exposure in various capacities with other women in ministry who indicated interest in, questions about, or needs of leadership growth mirrored my development. Their search without a mentor related to my journey realization, application, and maximizing of calling in Christian ministry and service. The vision and mission of BBC is to facilitate training via workshops and group and individual mentorship formats to affirm and enhance the impact and effectiveness of women in both traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership.

Context Demographics

Beyond Boundary Consulting demographics consist predominately of African American women. The raw statistics of 120-200 women attending (BBC) events shows a population of 99 % African American and 1% bi-racial Black and Hispanic mix. In terms of age, the population ranges from late 20's to mid 70's — single, married, and divorced. The level of education of the organization participant is 75% college educated, due in large part to Nashville being the “Athens of the South,” home of numerous colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions. Nearly all the participants received licensing after completion of ministers in training in their home church. Other participants discovered the organization on social media, by word of mouth, and in transition while moving to Nashville for job and career opportunities as traditional and nontraditional leaders. Practically all participants are bi-vocational attorneys, CEO's of non-profits, school teachers, pastors, and nurses.

Impact of Context Rebranding

The process of developing ministry focus led to revisiting, re-examining, and refining the goal and purpose of Beyond Boundary Consulting as being an arm of support to local church women in leadership under the umbrella of Echoes of Hope, Inc. Through context observation, a collection of needs (weakness) among women in ministry confirmed the need for a mentoring model.

Beyond Boundary Consulting has remained consistent and available as a resource for women in leadership since 2006. One major stumbling block or weakness has been maintaining adequate funding without a business loan, consistent donors, or other outside financial support. Secondly, Nashville pastors can be territorial, and women can easily

become intimidated and not attend because the organization or business is not affiliated with a church or officially endorsed by their church leadership. The tendency of false perception of BBC like other organizations is that they attempt to indoctrinate or lure women members and ministers (and their finances and support) away from their current home churches.

The challenges of women attaining professional/personal development underscores the need for services like BBC to exist. However, the importance of being financially solvent, along with addressing the misgivings and incorrect assumptions, add to day-to-day operations. Those issues can serve as blockades for BBC; however, the need is too great to stop. The participants can also be hindered from acquiring needed services, especially when their own context does not have programs in place to help and support them in leadership. This understanding empowered me to seek ways to stabilize BBC under the auspices of EOH.

Initially, all incoming funds were used for administrative assistants, scholarships covering registration costs for persons demonstrating financial need, and other event expenses. It was ten years before I began to include a fee for my services as part of the registration costs for event attendees. Using the earlier approach of no compensation for me to operate a ministry and service was difficult because I wanted to minimize expenses for everyone involved on top of continued work in my regular job as a physician assistant.

Approximately three years ago, I began to learn how to “build capacity” and started including a small salary for myself out of funds generated after expenses were paid out. The salary was reflective of the time and effort required to sustain the business.

The mindset of volunteer services in the church was discontinued and BBC's image began to shift in the mindset of the community as a business.

Another observed weakness with BBC was the need to update and revise its vision and mission statements to better clarify its specific intent, goals, and objectives. The connection with Echoes of Hope, Inc. provided more stability for BBC having similar efforts of training women.

Beyond Boundary Consulting, former name Trinity Wholeness Ministry (TWM), branded well in the religious community, but the business world found it difficult to classify as a business. The day-to-day operation includes training and addressing the misgivings and incorrect assumptions that may impede women from participating in BBC activities. Women attend BBC knowing it supplements the missing resources in their context. They can see growth in the lives of women who participate.

It was a difficult decision to change the name Trinity Wholeness Ministry in 2017 to Beyond Boundary Consulting and rebrand this vision as a social entrepreneurial business strictly opposed to a ministry. However, this provided an opportunity to personally put into practice the concept of balanced living to achieve wholeness, which remains foundational for effective service and leadership.

The name change has opened doors to grants, support from local banks, and the Small Business Administration (SBA) in support of the annual Beyond Boundary Institute and other services for nearly 200 women in ministry, business owners, housewives, and women in transition. Echoes of Hope has been awarded operational grant funding of \$50,000 during my matriculation at United Theological Seminary. A grant of \$2,500 was also awarded for a S.W.O.T. planner which has further assisted with creating, affirming, clarifying vision, aiding with proper planning and implementation to

increase sustainability and capacity building. In 2023, EOH will be applying for \$125,000.00 operational grant.

Goals after completion of the doctoral program is to include results from this project in the application when BBC applies for a Lilly Foundation grant to offer online courses as well as face-to-face mentorship to develop women in ministry. Last, the findings of this project will be published as a book and manual to train others to lead with this model. The future for Echoes of Hope Inc. includes continued Cancer Care, Beyond Boundary Consulting professional development, and to open a Respite Home Care for Women in Leadership.

Ministry Journey

In pursuit of fulfilling my vocation as a life-long learner, servant leader, advocate for addressing health disparities, and facilitator equipping others to thrive, I have found myself in the posture of training and program development in various contexts. In my early life and childhood growing up in the 1960s, I realized my ideologies and goals were far beyond those of my peers. Working and serving alongside the adults in my home church, I accepted my call into the pulpit ministry when I was twelve years old. The thematic thread seen in my spiritual autobiography is of God's protective hand and favor of God to accomplish goals. Secondly, my perceived dysfunction by family, friends, and the church as an overachiever, and the experience of often being ridiculed by those who misunderstood by passion for learning and training others was seen as being competitive. Years later, many of those same people have called on me for various types of assistance, input, and support of innovative ideas and implementation, and other kinds of services.

This exploration further reveals that I also lacked effective formal mentorship in various stages of my journey. The absence of adequate mentorship adds to one's weakness, doubt, lack of clarity, and frustration concerning self-awareness (in other vocations as well as in ministry). In hindsight, the main revelation gleaned was that I lacked healthy boundaries to protect my value and self-worth as a gifted, loving, and strong Black woman. Lastly, the assignment caused me to "replay" and critically examine several very traumatic situations in my life which had not been adequately addressed in childhood or adulthood.

My earliest formal exposures to Christian training and mentorship were with the Rice family and of being transported to church by these two elderly neighbors who together served at a small local community church. My love for words and interest in scripture was ignited, and attending Sunday school, Bible studies, and prayer services invigorated me even as a child. This was a gift, as my hope and faith were being nurtured in this setting.

It escapes me as to how we lost connection with the Rice family. We moved and remained in communication for a short period, and I have often wondered what happened to them. I do remember they did not have children. This period is probably the beginning of learning that people have been strategically placed in my life at various times with different influences leading to seasons of training which prepared me to embrace my calling. However, the true essence of mentorship for capacity building for sustainability was lacking in this relationship, although the argument could be made that they helped "plant and water the seed" of my ministry.

The second formal spiritual encounter was during the time I was a member of the Corinthian Unified Freewill Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut. The staff of this

“storefront” ministry consisted of the pastor, his wife, deacons, and trustees. While it was a small family church, it impressed me as appearing to be more structured than the unnamed community church I first attended. It is important for readers to know this was during my middle school years, and some memories and understandings are less clear.

I do remember incidents including fights with girls, a horrible winter, and being chased by a dog on to its owner’s car. On my birthday, I ended up in the principal’s office at school after fighting a girlfriend who was instigated by others to antagonize me about being poor. On the other hand, this girl’s family was being nurtured by my mother because her father was abusive. This was not on my mind, as I had nearly given her a concussion beating her on the head with her shoe. It was a horrible birthday. My mother was not a Christian at the time, but she knew what would hurt me more than a whipping; my punishment was no church for a week.

It was obvious to the pastor’s wife at Corinthian Baptist Church that I gravitated toward Sunday school and Bible study, as I always wanted to be the reader and always would be ready when she arrived to walk us across the street. In the eighth grade I gave my life to God and accepted salvation. Not long after that experience, a friend invited me to English Chapel, which became my third church home. The purpose of ministry came with more clarity as I continued to read my Bible, fast, and pray. It was not long after accepting Christ’s salvation that I started sensing God through visions and dreams along with a strong desire to preach. Why? No one was a minister in our family as far as I knew. My mother was not even a member of a church. She appeared to hate God after her brother was shot and killed. She would recite what she heard the minister say at the funeral, “I know this brother went to hell, he was playing cards and drinking when he

died.” This hurt my mother deeply because he was actually shot while trying to protect a woman in distress.

In high school, friends and I organized a group called “Bible Study Fellowship,” and the school gospel choir sang at many churches in and around New Haven, Connecticut. The teachers who served as advisors seemed to enjoy the organizations more than the students. The administration officially recognized and adopted both groups as student extracurricular activities and included the groups in the school yearbook.

In my local church, I sang in the choir and held office in the Young People's Christian League (YPCL) on both the local and national level, serving as a delegate at the regional and national conferences and conventions. I was one of the first youth of the English Chapel Unified Free Will Baptist Church under the leadership of the General Bishop Jonathan Powell to attend the ministerial school of religion at the age of thirteen. The curriculum was that of the Evangelical Teachers Training Association (ETTA). I accepted my call and preached my initial sermon. On a Sunday afternoon, the church was filled with people from near and far to see and hear the thirteen-year-old “baby preacher.” I was ordained at sixteen years of age during the summer after I graduated high school and was on my way to Fisk University. I felt overwhelmed and excited, attending meetings, conferences, and accepting speaking invitations as a young teen “preacher girl” without a mentor. Because of this experience, it has always been my desire to teach and equip others and to make a difference in the lives of the people I encounter.

In my culture, and to a considerable extent in mainstream America, attaining a degree in religion has not been thought to be a viable modality to create wealth or significant impact on society (and even more so in the case of women). The long struggle

for women's rights and equal acceptance and treatment continues, (especially in terms of equal respect and salaries and compensation in all vocations, including the church). Not only were there few mentors, but also few viable occupational choices for women with graduate and postgraduate degrees in theology. In many cases, women who actually become pastors of churches, academic professors, or leaders and executives in other religious organizations do not receive salaries comparable to their male counterparts.

In my preparation for college, I also knew that I had a heart and passion for medicine and writing. This career track was pursued with little guidance from family, friends, and school counselors. Many adults discouraged me from seeking higher education and academic training in theology and counseling, tools that would have assisted me in my current profession of writing and publishing resources for Christian education and training. While traveling this ministry focus journey, Malcolm X's autobiography, along with the movie version, was intriguing to me. It highlighted his spiritual and political evolution; however, I felt that the women in his religion were unempowered and hiding sadness as they followed the male leaders without question, except for his wife Betty. This exploration was discontinued because I felt empty, nothing like the "fullness of joy" I experienced in attending church.

The leaders at my church were unaware of my exploration into another religion and faith while I continued to serve at English Chapel, and my family had other plans for me. This included modeling and dancing for a national company that trained girls and young women for photo shoots connected with department stores. God's love and protection were manifested in an interesting and unusual way. A state beauty queen met with my mother to tell her to be careful because the agency was exploiting the younger models (some in prostitution) and she did not want to see that happen to me. I was in the

seventh or eighth grade and remember that conversation so vividly — God was protecting and directing me.

Another occasion of God's protective hand in my life was in my early teenage years. A group of community children were outside playing in a construction site on large drums of commercial paint when a man threw a torch that resulted in an explosion. Standing amid this horrific moment of children on the ground covered by debris and fire, hearing sirens, and seeing EMS personnel finally arriving — not one ember or flame touched me. It was as if I were in a dream, but in shock. I remember dashing off and running toward home straight past my mother. She sent neighborhood friends and family to catch me and hold me down. Finally, there was a moment of feeling like I was waking up out of what appeared to be a dream, with her calling me: "Annette!" Her hand motion across my face slapping me, while tears streamed down my face, and later a cool cloth. I remember clasping my arms around her, saying "They are all dead — all dead."

Later that evening a few of the parents of the other children came to our apartment to assure me that my friends were not dead, but alive, burnt very badly, and at the hospital. Many of them lived; however, my friend Michelle's five-year-old baby sister died due to a compromising congenital heart condition. Her brother went through many years of rehab and drug addiction from the shock of the event, perhaps suffering PTSD. Some of the others had similar problems, while some who survived the event are living relatively normal lives. I was told later that the torched community was not an accident, but the work of angry investors and people who did not want Black and Hispanic people moving into a new housing development close to downtown New Haven near the police headquarters and the train station.

I grew to understand this incident as an example of hate and racism that continued to be felt in our neighborhood. The construction company was sued for accidental death, loss of limbs, and multiple charges for leaving flammable substances unguarded at the construction site. My family was just grateful I was spared and did not join the lawsuits. They should have, if for no other reason than the emotional and psychological trauma it caused. They did not realize the impact of that experience on my young life, but instead would always say “You are strong, and God protected you.”

It was also during the years of middle and high school that I began to write and found peace, clarity, and strength through recording these and other experiences. My first manuscript, “Some Other Way,” has fictitious characters, but is based on my life experiences in coming to the realization that life could be better with God and hard work. The manuscript was not published, even though I signed a contract and received a contingency fee. I did not know that the companies I submitted the manuscript to were vanity publishing houses but was certain my parents were not going to agree to make financial sacrifices to have it published.

More major examples of God’s protection, social justice, and grace on my life as a woman on the road toward ministerial preparation and achievement are found in my “covering” by strong female “hidden figures.” The older women in my family were not formally educated, but were and are filled with wisdom, knowledge, and strength that informally mentored me to survive and thrive on my journey. They were literally “mothers of invention,” entrepreneurs working from their kitchens as hair stylists, running “pop-up” restaurants, managing home-based day care centers, and practicing “life coaching” long before that term became popular.

Family Observations

I observed the women in my family caring for so many people as I continued to be reared by my mother and aunt Eva who is now ninety-three years old, and my grandmother. My mother attended church with me a month before I went away for my first year of college. The message of love touched her heart, and she rededicated her life to God. It comforted me to know that she was back in fellowship with God, and that she would be protected while I was away.

I mentioned these women because I realized their devotion to God and community. This gave me a greater understanding and appreciation of them as I matured. Their love and service to other women and their families were incredible.

As a Black woman in a world whose value of humanity is predicated on gender and race, I chose to move forward in courage, conviction, creativity, and collaboration with humanity and God. Inclusion and collaboration are the result of being raised in a home among a diverse community of Blacks, Whites, and Puerto Ricans. Acts of solidarity became second nature for me, going as far back as my childhood memories of a house full of females, with my mother demonstrating faith, hope, and unconditional love as a community matriarch. “The Lord had shown her, what was required of her... To act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with her God” (paraphrase of Micah 6:8). She did not have a college degree, but she was always mentoring women of all ages in ways to navigate life from the “sacred desk” the kitchen table.

Developing the Synergy

The first semester’s exploration assignments created an increased desire to continue mentoring women in ministry by developing a culturally centered mentor-

mentee manual. In my view, the current models in this format are (subconsciously if unintentionally) designed for white women in leadership and lack content that addresses the significant cultural differences and dynamics of women and groups from other racial and ethnic backgrounds.

My observations from recent mentoring activities with women of color include having noted some culturally specific (and often missed) needs of these women. Examples in this regard can include dealing with intra-racial and male-female dynamics such as attitudes of male and female church members toward women ministers; attitudes of male ministers toward female ministers (and vice versa); attitudes of women ministers toward other women ministers (from their own and other racial and ethnic groups); and statistical data comparing male and female ministers' church appointments, church sizes, and salaries.

Developing and implementing the mentoring model used by Beyond Boundary Consulting in churches, para church organizations, and business settings for Black leaders will increase more Black women's effectiveness in leadership. The model will have a greater reach as a supplement for continuing support and education courses that provide opportunities for ministers who are not formally trained to interact with and glean from those who have been trained and/or have more years and experience in ministry. Information and updates regarding relevant workshops and conferences also can be shared, along with other tools and materials that enhance their knowledge and skill sets.

In final remarks about my ministerial context, the work and the consistency of the ministry over forty-plus years of existence is worthy of acknowledgement and celebration for its positive impact and influence; however, there is potential and capacity

to do so much more, which leads to posing the following questions: (1) How can concepts of transformative learning be introduced and effectively applied toward a healthy balance of tradition and innovation, replacing uncertainties and creating bridges to fulfill the vision by fully utilizing the abundance of gifts and skills? (2) How do you create spaces to maximize value and equity for those involved in the traditional and nontraditional ministry?

Skill Sets

Professional, personal, ministerial skills and expertise in this project include:

1. Education/training and experience as a licensed medical practitioner (qualifications for teaching/training others in selfcare relationships of body, mind, and spirit)
2. Professional certification as a life coach specializing in needs of women at various life stages
3. Status as a Senior Elder of the church (which speaks to longevity/seasoning in ministry and trust of the church leadership)
4. Years of additional academic training which can be applied to educate and equip others
5. Expertise in the value and application of scientific research as a laboratory assistant
6. Academic teaching (Fisk University, American Baptist College, Nashville State Community College)
7. Certification as a personality coach with training in interpersonal and group conflict resolution
8. Faculty and mentor for numerous Christian Writers Conferences and
9. Organizer, mobilizer, and stabilizer personality type

These skill sets have been applied in working with various groups of women in community, including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, National Consortium of Black Women In Ministry, Advanced Writers and Speakers Association, and other organizations as a leader and professional development mentor. I have also served as faculty for various national writers' conferences and training services. Also, I have more than two decades of experience as a healthcare provider in family, internal, and acute medicine.

My personal and spiritual life journey clearly reflect multiple and diverse times of triumph, trauma, cancer, dysfunction, and a host of encounters with God that confirms a divine call on my life to lead others toward living life as God has masterfully designed their vocations. This involves my recognition of the need for quality lifestyle “blueprints,” then using the model to “break new ground” and begin building better foundations and frameworks to support their God-given purpose and destiny. Thus, encouraging and strengthening Black women in ministerial leadership to withstand and overcome obstacles and challenges is an overall goal.

Kirk Byron Jones, in *Holy Play*, suggests that part of immobilization is because we do not realize we can still make choices according to personal passion and preferences, while hoping they agree with pre-ordained destiny and/or “divine assignments” from God.² This perspective came because of Jones asking God to help him with a vocation decision. The response from God was, “Know this: Whichever path you choose, I will be with you.”³ How awesome is this promise and revelation for any

² Kirk Bryon Jones, *Holy Play: The Joyful Adventure of Unleashing Your Divine Purpose* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 6.

³ Bryon Jones, *Holy Play*, 6.

woman in ministry, who may have previously seen their calling from only one perspective (i.e., preaching) and allowed their creativity and passion for ministry to dwindle (if not die) when that option is limited. Effective mentor-mentee relationships can validate ministers to consider alternatives in exercising their gifts and callings, which will affirm and add value in terms of their contributions as servant leaders.

My Self-Assessment Identified Concerns Requiring Modification that Include:

1. Inability to tactfully communicate differences of opinion and/or alternative ideas (often misconstrued as open disagreement and/or a disrespectful attitude toward others)
2. Timidity/lack of confidence that leaves an impression of personal
 - a. weakness
3. Inconsistencies in staffing and income/financial resources to support client services

The first project activity involves an assessment and documentation of reasons why some women in ministry are not functioning well in their service contexts. This information will be utilized to develop solutions to these problems and concerns via a mentoring circle of trust model designed to empower the participants. The women in Beyond Boundary Consulting are well versed in the Bible and hungry to serve but are uncertain as to how and where they fit in the context. Most of them have college degrees and are working professionals who completed training in the church ministerial program (MIT). Some have pursued additional certification in Christian counseling from Light University which is affiliated with the American Association of Christian Counseling.

The overarching theme of the project is relationship building among women in ministry and leadership to cultivate insight, support, and navigation effectiveness in

vocation. Mentorship is proposed as the anchor for effective application of transformative learning as seen in execution of ministerial goals. For example, learnings from Sarah and Hagar's narrative (found in the Book of Genesis), in my opinion, reflects missed opportunities for agreement and collaboration between two phenomenal women. These women had so much to offer and gain from each other. The negative connotations generally attributed to the relationship of Sarah and Hagar also contribute to the perception of women often being their own worst enemies, (especially in the case of Black women). This is an applicable truth that I thought was worthy of mentioning. The narrative stands as an example of missed relational opportunities in a woman-to-woman and mentor-mentee relationship to sharpen one another's gifting and enhance mutual self-worth.

A biblical example of a mentorship type female relationship is between Mary and Elizabeth (Luke 1). They demonstrate agreement and mutual support in their relationship. At the same time, they identify the "seed" of their special, yet different callings in nurturing the natural and spiritual growth, development, successful delivery, and sustainability of their divine assignments as mothers to Jesus and John the Baptist respectively. It is the pairing of women like Elizabeth and Mary that validates the proposed model as used by Beyond Boundary Consulting. There is a lasting impact for those mentored via a culturally congruent model. Innovative women like Elizabeth and Mary prove the effectiveness in their leadership assignments.

Integrating experience with Beyond Boundary Consulting, an outreach service, was an important factor in helping women to embrace and develop other Black women and empower them. The result via mentoring afforded them the ability to move forward in ministry in their individual contexts. This ministry focus shows how Beyond

Boundary Consulting model is a significant resource in understanding the needs of women in ministry and providing tools to rectify concerns.

Conclusion

The convergence of themes observed in the spiritual autobiography and contextual analysis affirmed and confirmed that I am valuable enough to protect my purpose, love, and be loved unconditionally. I am able to collaborate with others in unity to create change, to live so that adversity is not a deterrent, continue to share gifts and talents in wisdom and balance with appropriate boundaries and pass on wisdom and knowledge to help others blossom in their callings. These attributes and experiences have been stepping stones on the path of my journey in developing others into women God can use. At the same time, I am living abundantly in the joy of serving and leading, which are also foundational resources for my matriculation as a candidate in the United Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program. Self-awareness of gifts and personality type (motivator, organizer, and stabilizer) strengthens my contextual ministry focus for sustainability and capacity building.

The doctoral program has increased ministry focus as I am paired with a circle of professional associates guiding me through this project. It again proves that mentorship with Black women of cultural sameness empowers ones' effectiveness. The provision these relationships offer is an exchange of self-identity, learning, and growth for building capacity and sustainability. The overall ministry focus solidified my social location to realize that I have come this far by faith, hard work, and listening to the wisdom of those on the journey.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Women in ministry who take the time to mentor others in leadership are the model of the patriarchs of old, whose lineage is noted throughout the sacred text. It parallels the male perpetuating their heritage and skills along with their cultural and social dominance. There is little to no record of women as matriarchs passing the torch as mentors in the Bible. Sure, we read of naturally assisting in the birthing and nurturing, but what about those components in terms of developing and maintaining women in leadership. The scriptures from the Old and New Testament offer many male examples of mentorship. In writing this thesis, a candid look is being taken from Luke's narrative of Elizabeth and Mary's example of a culturally congruent mentor-mentee relationship. Their story in (Luke 1:26-45) is a source for shaping women to answer the call into ministry with sustainability. This is a model of a matriarch mentoring (training) a novice leader.

A core ideology of this doctoral thesis and project postulates a need with many variables that Black women in ministerial leadership require to be mentored by Black women. It is not that we cannot learn from women of other cultures; however, there are some specific pearls of life that cannot be taught by a non-Black woman. Thus, there is a need for leadership development for culturally congruent mentorship as seen in the

narrative of Elizabeth and Mary. It is in the congruent relationship that multiple levels of consciousness are peeled back and clarified as in the idea of “double and triple consciousness” to be discussed in the theological foundation chapter.

Living in a society of pluralistic leadership with vocations that are interdisciplinary, women find themselves either bi-vocational or serving solely in a traditional ministry or nontraditional ministry settings. This societal leadership paradigm shift further complicates how women enter and maintain effective ministry practices while attempting to discover who they are and their call into ministry. It has become vital that the church and academy begin to train leaders to mentor in an effort to refine leaders similar to secular leaders to maintain excellence and momentum. It is imperative amidst societal changes to “begat” female mentors to lead ministerially for continued kingdom building in all facets of our world. Feminist Catholic theologian Mary Ann Hinsdale, in her article “Who are the ‘Begat’? or Women Theologians Shaping Women Theologians,” validates the insufficient number of female professors and sisters available to mentor during her academic training for leadership. Hinsdale admits that “Catholic theology had become quite pluralistic and interdisciplinary and was being approached from multiple contexts.”¹ The intersection of multiple disciplines, religion, and politics necessitates the Black church to become actively aware of changes in our world to prepare well-rounded Black women mentors, who are innovative women, to lead effectively.

Thus, the selected scripture passage for this doctoral studies program is foundational to my passion for leadership training. In particular, Black women in ministry mentorship are prepared to lead others as mentors in traditional and

¹ Mary Ann Hinsdale, “Who are the ‘Begats’? or Women Theologians Shaping Women Theologians,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2017), 92.

nontraditional faith-based settings. As opposed to the landscape of leadership training in a nontraditional ecclesiastical setting the leader enters, she sees her role with mentorship benefits for building capacity and sustainability as an effective leader. In Beyond Boundary Consulting contexts, there is a diverse opportunity to engage Black women in various areas of praxis, both traditional and nontraditional ministry, providing many women in leadership mentors to aid with leadership challenges.

Everyone has a backstory. As rapport was developed among BBC women, they disclosed affirmation of the essential need for a culturally congruent mentoring model. This relational learning model among innovative Black women for efficacy in traditional and nontraditional leadership is proven to be a solution for the project problem.

I have personal observation and experience with mentoring leaders at Echoes of Hope, Inc. (EOH), a non-profit organization, that provides community cancer care service that assists and train leaders to navigate women and their families through the trajectory of a cancer diagnosis and treatment. Also, women leaders are observed in Beyond Boundary Consulting, a professional development entity, that consults via coaching and mentoring service for female ministry leaders in the marketplace or in transition of a life career. Both organizations attract women from all walks of life and equip them via coaching and mentoring individuals or in groups that meet quarterly in workshops.

Observation made in the context identified that women were stagnant — often with a sense of complete immobilization. They described feeling ill-equipped needing a mentor as leaders. The insufficiency or lack of mentorship in the lives of these women further increase disparities in leadership among men. Those who seek services at BBC event training are Black women pastors, ministers, laity, chaplains, and health ministers,

and some in nontraditional leadership roles with concrete needs. Listed are concerns of their contextual ministerial immobilization due to a lack of mentorship:

- Disengagement in the work of the ministry after being licensed
- No, follow-through and accountability of ministerial vision
- No continued ministerial education and training
- Unequipped to carry out an assignment
- Unresolved church hurt and trauma
- Need for healing via counseling, deliverance, and forgiveness
- Trained but lack continued praxis
- Lack of effective mentor-mentee relationship
- Fragmentation and vagueness of ministry capacity and purpose

The milieu of this DMin project for United Theological Seminary is to develop a culturally congruent mentoring model for innovative Black women efficacy. The proposed objective and goals are to create a sense of wholeness, clarity of vision, and tools for both capacity building and sustainability as Black women. This idea is revealed in the demonstrative model between Elizabeth and Mary. A profound example of mentor-mentee is present in Luke 1:26-45. The biblical foundation premise will work to show how “iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”² This text in Luke will point to revelation, confirmation, development, and implementation of ministry assignments in the lives of two women in an oppressive male-dominated society. The project’s hypothesis suggests that if Black women in ministry lead as mentors, it will facilitate a circle of trust that encourages mentees to engage in self-discovery training that transforms stagnant women into confident, effective ministry leaders. Mentorship is a model of training that teaches what Karynthia Phillips calls the “The Four Cs of Love and

² “Proverbs 27:17,” *The Revised Standard Version*, 1971, Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Leadership.” This includes core caveats of courage, conviction, creativity and collaboration with man and God.”³

Why Luke and not Matthew

The relationship between Elizabeth and Mary leverages the proof of the project hypothesis in the title regarding developing a culturally congruent mentoring model for innovative Black women’s effectiveness in leadership. This leadership implementation of an innovative cultural model for female leadership with pedagogical learning is essential for self-discovery, clarity of ministry vision, and strategies for sustainability as demonstrated between Elizabeth and Mary. This paper argues Luke’s focus on Elizabeth and Mary as women in leadership. Matthew’s account, however, focused on Joseph, although there is mention of Elizabeth and Mary. The passage also shows prerequisites of mentor-mentee relationship in a same cultural origin, producing transformation of a confident protégé with self-awareness and clarity of ministry to execute effectively.

I do not argue that Black women cannot learn from white women in ministry, but the hidden barrier of cultural differences inhibits the rate of bonding for clear communication. One of the major breakdowns in mentor-mentee relationship building is that women paired with culturally different women are always explaining themselves to prevent offense and other miscommunication results. This takes an absorbent amount of time to wade through each other’s vernacular. In most mentor-mentee relationships with the same cultural origin, a circle of trust bonds a lot faster unless there is a marked

³ Karynthia Phillips, “The Four Cs of Love and Leadership,” in *She Writes for Him: Black Voices of Wisdom*, ed. Cynthia Cavanaugh (Enumclaw, WA: Romans 8:28 Books, 2021), 25.

difference in personality types and leadership styles. Perhaps this is why Elizabeth connected so easily with Mary.

The Backstory of Elizabeth and Mary

The passage will be examined in terms of the literary form along with the historical and social context. This pericope will be exegetically discussed.

The Selected Passage

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, 'Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!'²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be.³⁰ And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.'³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this be, since I have no husband?'³⁵ And the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.³⁶ And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.'³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible.'³⁸ And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her.³⁹ In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah,⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!⁴³ And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?'⁴⁴ For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb

⁴ "Lk 1:26–45," *The Revised Standard Version*, 1971, Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁵ David A. DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Context, Methods & Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 298.

leaped for joy.⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.’⁴

Overview

The book of Luke is the third gospel in the New Testament with the attributing authorship given to Luke, who is not thought to be an eyewitness of his contribution in the book. The books of Luke and Acts both follow the tradition of entry of information in the prologues. Scholars indicate that Theophilus must have been a city official converted to Christianity. He became a financial supporter of Luke’s work which adds validity to Luke being the scribe. His authorship has not been challenged (DeSilva, 2004).⁵ Luke is also given credit for being a traveling companion of Paul.

The period this book was written is controversial with a date range in the second century around CE 175-225. Luke’s educational background affords his writing ability to demonstrate clarity of thought and his openness to societal changes. He is referred to as “the beloved physician” in Colossian 4:14. The scholarly presentation of Luke is Hellenistic with some scientific tradition in that Luke was a physician. Tertullian argues that Luke’s writings could have been one of another profession such as a lawyer. Thus, there is no question he had an academic status of nobility. “The author’s vocabulary does not in itself provide proof of his occupation; however, other nonphysician terms in the Hellenistic period use the same variety of terms.”⁶

The book of Luke reveals the most significant number of women in the Gospels in some form of servanthood leadership. The number is thought to be thirteen or more in

⁶ David A. DeSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, in Henry Cadbury, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920), 1:50-51.

groups or individual women. Luke wrote to include women; however, the day-to-day life was one of an androcentric society.

Jane Schaberg suggests,

[T]he author of Luke is interested in the education of women in the basics of the Christian faith and the education of outsiders about Christian women. The Gospel attempts to meet various needs, such as instructing and edifying women converts, appeasing detractors of Christianity, and controlling women who practice or aspire to practice a prophetic ministry in the church. One of the strategies of this Gospel is to provide female readers with female characters as role models: prayerful, quiet, grateful women, supportive of male leadership, forgoing the prophetic ministry. The education that the study of Luke offers today involves a conscious critique of this strategy. It is not at all the education Luke had in mind! He is thought to be a friend of women.⁷

Although women are included in the book of Luke, the women are depicted in classic examples of subordinate servitude. They are denied inclusion in community power movements and not given decision-making authority and leadership roles or responsibilities in the imperialist governed society. The women who were married or born into a royal or an elite family were considered “emancipated,” yet restricted in leadership and authority.⁸

Luke’s audience is both Gentiles and Jews who were converted to Christianity. The populations were not only the oppressed and marginalized but those with status as noted by Luke’s honor of Theophilus. Luke admits in 1:2-4 that he did not witness the words written but had an understanding and wanted others to have certainty with and understanding of the instructions given them. The key purpose of the book, aside from

⁷ Jane Schaberg, “Luke,” in *The Women’s Bible Commentary: Expanded Edition with Apocrypha*, eds. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 363.

⁸ Schaberg, “Luke,” 367.

historical facts, is to remind followers of God's faithfulness to Israel to provide continued instruction to the church and reinforce their confidence in the promises of God. Luke's writing attempts to parallel the expansion of the kingdom of God, including all humankind.

Literary Element of Text

This gospel is written in a traditional style for historical consistency as a synoptic gospel with Luke's personality and reflection sprinkled throughout the text to the audience of Gentiles and Jews. The treatment of the "L" source poses strength to this project as it allowed Luke to demonstrate individuality of women. In his perspective he viewed society making progress in a setting of injustice as they became more empowered with the truths and promises of God.⁹ Luke is not writing from an eyewitness account. He wrote from the perspective of oral history, scribal fragments of history, and songs like the Magnificat. The lyric of the Magnificat is a literary element of poetry. The literary approach points to a journalistic style of writing as Luke presents women as emergent significance of and during his time.

The outline of the book of Luke journals 13 narratives of women

1. Elizabeth, Mary mother Jesus (1-2)
2. The prophetess Anna in the infancy narrative (2)
3. The widow of Nain and the miracle of her deceased son (7:12-17)

⁹ Many scholars believe that L Source is an oral or textual tradition of writings where Luke received some of his information from that is not found in the synoptic gospel of Matthew.

4. The converted prostitute who anointed Jesus' feet (7:36-50)
5. The women who became followers of Jesus from Galilee (8:1-3)
6. Martha and Mary (10:38-42)
7. The crying woman in the crowd (11:27-28)
8. The bent over woman (13:10-17)
9. The parable of the sweeping woman (15:8-10)
10. The parable of the persistent woman before the judge (18:1-8)
11. The young women and daughters from Jerusalem (23:27-32)
12. Women at the feet of the cross (23:49)
13. The women who prepared the spices (23:56)

A scholarly literature search in the *Women's Bible Commentary* finds that Luke has an intentional pattern of demonstrating throughout the book of "pairing" of narratives of males and females. This is observed in what can appear as duplicated incidents that occur between male and female.¹⁰ This literary style of writing explicitly indicates that Luke was expressing the equality of male and female, the cultural power of congruence, and value and progression of the times in terms of heritage and traditions. There are other ideologies that might have been on Luke's mind while attempting to be inconspicuous in a society that did not honor women as to the pairing of male and female. It might have been an undercover method of providing a visibility to women in an androcentric era. It is necessary to reiterate here that this project is not about the woman's question to lead, but the value of mentorship of culturally congruent Black women in leadership.

¹⁰ Schaberg, "Luke," 366.

This “pairing phenomena” can suggest many probabilities; however, it can also imply the idea of the importance for companionship and collaboration in life and ministry. This is again significant in terms of the “Four Cs of Love and Leadership” as being essential for ones’ personal core values in a leader who mentors. The 4C’s building blocks of what this author suggest for the “pairing phenomena” in a mentor-mentee relationship is courage, conviction, creativity and collaboration with man and God to be efficacy in the vocation of both traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership.¹¹

There is another pattern noted in the passage that is one of reversal in relation to the contrast between two women. Luke continues to show the reader the lifestyle of women during this time. The two women are the spotlight of the passage in terms of God’s assignments for their lives. There are some basic reversals:

Elizabeth	Mary
Reside in a rural town	Reside in a metropolis (larger city)
Old in age/barren	Young/virgin
Wife of a priest/high status	Low social status
Pregnancy is a miracle/enhance status	Pregnancy is a miracle/initially lower status more being unwed

The caveat about the reversal phenomena is the reversal between the two women when Mary’s lowly state is elevated as the woman to give birth to the son of God in the line of David. Another reversal is apparent between the men in these women lives — they are

¹¹ Phillips, “The Four Cs of Love and Leadership,” 25.

silenced. Zechariah is muted until John's birth and Joseph is nowhere to be found in the passage until near the birth of the baby Jesus.

A third point of pairing seen in mentoring in the passage is their relationship shown as a three months (Luke 1:56) visitation period. In most developmental phases of mentoring agreement, a minimal of ninety days are recommended for quality outcomes with relational learning as between mentor-mentee.

Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, in his book *Pot Changers: Innovative Change in an Ever Changing World*, confirms the "pairing phenomena" as the candidate defines as a methodology of matching Black women in leadership with those who are successful to continue the legacy of females in leadership.¹² Sadler reminds the reader that, "The apostle Paul sought opportunities to identify, nurture, and develop future PotChangers to continue a legacy of effective leadership succession."¹³ 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 (NKJV) encourages spiritual fatherhood — a prototype of mentorship and discipleship of the gospel to others that is foundational to perpetuating the gospel as demonstrated in effective leadership.

Pot Changers, as written by Dr. J. Elvin Sadler, reveals four essential reasons for leadership succession that can be transposed into mentorship for efficacy in leadership:

- It ensures a successful transition.
- It reduces the stress of the unknown.
- It fosters continuity of vision and mission.
- It preserves a legacy.¹⁴

¹² J. Elvin, Sadler, *Pot Changers: Innovative Change in an Ever-Changing World* (Matthews, NC: KDP Publishing, LLC, 2020), 22.

¹³ Sadler, *Pot Changers*, 51.

¹⁴ Sadler, *Pot Changers*, 51-54.

The literary construct of the pericope narrative Luke 1:26-45 reveals the “pairing phenomena” with Elizabeth’s mentorship in the life of young Mary to answer the call to motherhood of the Messiah. This will be unfolded as we progress through the thesis: A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model for Innovative Black Women’s Efficacy In Leadership.

Historical Setting of Text

The women depicted in this passage have unique roles of leadership during this period of history.

Elisabeth holds two distinctions that lend immortality to her name. She was the mother of John the Baptist, forerunner of the Messiah, and she was first to greet her cousin Mary as the mother of the Messiah. Elisabeth also occasioned two of the greatest poems in the New Testament, Mary’s Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and Zacharias’ Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79), both of which are parts of the ritual in the Christian Church today.¹⁵

Mary was now called to physically be the carrier of the “gospel” as the Son of God begins a ministry of leadership without a mentor. She hears of Elizabeth’s call to motherhood and hasten to visit her. The journey was through hills and probably rough terrain, but her desire was to gain insight from someone who lived a life of disgrace as a barren woman, now with child, who would be able to reduce her stress of the unknown. The wisdom from Elizabeth to foster hope and continuity of the vision and mission given her from the angel Gabriel was now being shared. Mary realized that Elizabeth was of the same culture and would be able to guide her to preserve legacy and fulfill the call to deliver the man-child, Jesus the Christ, to a world waiting on the promise.

¹⁵ Edith Deen, *All the Women of the Bible* (San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1955), 168.

Elizabeth's non-traditional ministry is apparent in the mentoring of Mary, her protégé, to ensure a successful transition as a wife, mother, and woman whose child would fulfill the promise of God to a world that was in waiting for justice (the Savior). One might not see the nontraditional leadership role of Elizabeth and Mary in the text, but one must remember the historical period this narrative was recorded considering the cultural and social setting of the time.

Cultural and Social Setting

In reading commentaries, journals, and being in dialogue with theologians, one can easily recognize that Luke respects the value of women in terms of their unique ability to proclaim the message of the gospel in an androcentric society. The articles currently researched are from the lens of feminist theology. Although women physically are alike, there are many differences between women of Color and the perspective of womanist theology. Thus, cultural and the social settings can impact the theology that one adopts. This leadership pairing is important to survival of a church or organization.

As stated earlier, Luke illustrates narratives in pairs, most often with men and women. For example, in the designated passage, you see Zacharias and Elizabeth paired with Joseph and Mary. Both couples have distinct roles in society that bring attention to the men and the women with the annunciation of conception. The objective of this passage will demonstrate the impact of Luke's writing in pairs to disclose the significance of perpetuating efficacy in leadership facilitated by pairing. The duality of the mentor-mentee relationship, particularly when discussing women in ministry, is seen with Mary seeking out guidance from Elizabeth. Their bond results in fortifying Mary's

navigation of self-discovery in a society of male dominance, imperialism, women suppression, economic inequity, and marginalization.

The selected passage from Luke's Gospel is a focal point for the project because it gives the foundation of the relationship between mentor-mentee with Elizabeth and reveals women's progressive movement during his time. The annunciation of the conception begins the ministry of two women. Elizabeth and Mary develop a relationship more profound than being cousins; their bond is demonstrated in the proclamation of the gospel via the nurturing, training, and development of the forerunner of Christ (John) and the savior of the world (Messiah). This ministry was not the usual motherhood but one destined to change the course of the world.

Elizabeth, the wife of a priest and barren for years, was shamed and considered worthless, when her husband, the man of God, is told that his wife will give birth and his name will be John; his doubt left him in a muted state until his son's birth. Mary approaches Elizabeth after she accepts the announced conception. Like women called into ministry, they are excited, hesitant, unsure, and seek guidance from another mature woman as seen by Mary.

Mary the mother of Jesus mirrors and influences historical issues across the trajectory of Black women in society and through biblical studies, theology, race, and the dualism of gender and sexuality. These issues continue to oppress and compress women of Color often limiting their abilities to reach their full potential in life. For example, we see this in salary inequitably in traditional and non-traditional leadership being based on their race, gender, and sexuality. Considering the many barriers' women face in leadership, one can discern comfort and confirmation for sustainability through conversation.

The narrative provides a conversation between Mary and Elizabeth revealing an exchange of comfort, confirmation, and hope for their futures. Their relationship unfolds the unique example of a mentor -mentee relational learning. In Luke 1:39-45 the narrative offers confirmative proof of the effectiveness of congruent mentoring. The passage demonstrates the equipping (mentoring) of a young woman to fulfil her call to carry the gospel. Zora Neale Hurston further affirms culturally congruent mentoring by comparing our first mentor to a matriarch. She states, “Mama exhorted her children at every opportunity to ‘jump at de sun.’”¹⁶ Affirming how having someone who understand your goals, dreams, and desires to challenge you to attain your vision creates support to try.

Luke’s depiction of Mary is from a womanist perspective considering the Bible and motherhood. Crowder emphasizes how Luke notes Mary’s hometown was Nazareth. It was an obscured area which is suggestive of belittlement of Mary.¹⁷ Nazareth, an isolated village in the lower part of Galilee, is not mentioned in the Old Testament — probably indicating insignificance, agricultural living, marginalized community with minimal resources, or notoriety. One might surmise, therefore, that Mary might have exhibited low self-esteem by her reaction to the angelic visitation. She could not see herself favored or even having the possibility to be experiencing a visitation from an angel; nevertheless, she is given the role of the mother of Christ being birthed in Nazareth. The identification of her hometown further reveals proof of the birth home of Jesus, a community of dominantly Jews, and historical literature reports no influence of

¹⁶ Zora Neal Hurston, *Dust Track on the Road* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1942), 13.

¹⁷ Stephanie Buckhannon Crowder, *When Momma Speaks: The Bible and Motherhood from A Womanist Perspective* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press), 74.

the Roman military.¹⁸ Luke's influence by the Romans is also visible in the choice to indicate Mary's birthplace in terms of the Roman empire having a superior mentality of rulership. This is a further indication that Mary lived in a low social economical community.

The lowly Mary, from a rural town that is south of Galilee, expresses gratitude of elevation in an oppressed society that is echoed through the *Magnificat*. Brown postulates the *Magnificat* as an Old Testament song of praise that Hannah (I Samuel 1-2) and Miriam (Exodus 15:21) sung.¹⁹ Luke perhaps heard this song sung by other women attributing God's mercy for allowing them to be blessed to have conceived. This happened in a culture where your sexual anatomy determined your worth. For example, women were designated as child bearers, and the male genital signified dominance. Blount further suggest, "It is a hymn 'anawim,' the 'poor' of the Lord, fashioned for God's use. The 'poor of the Lord' was designation for children, widows, foreigners, and others who were economically and socially impoverished."²⁰

In terms of Mary given the responsibility as a young woman to bear Christ, coming from a town where people were of a low class must have caused fear, doubt, and much uncertainty; this is indicated by her question: "How?" Renita Weens states, "Mary was not questioning the wisdom of her age. Instead, she questions the inconvenience of it all . . . She knew enough to realize that being betrothed and pregnant by anyone other

¹⁸ Crowder, *When Momma Speaks*, 74.

¹⁹ Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1999), 237.

²⁰ Brian K. Blount, ed., *True to Our Native Land: An African New Testament Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 161.

than the man she was to marry was dangerous in her society.”²¹ The value of mentoring aid in our moving beyond the inconvenience of the call and accepting it as a sacrifice for the Kingdom.

The angel stayed until Mary accepted the call and submitted to God’s assignment for her life. After Mary’s encounter, she needed human guidance. Thus, one can understand why she sought Elizabeth. A woman having a child after many years of possible oppression, depression, and uncertainty might understand Mary. An unwed young girl who conceives by the Holy Spirit had to create a lot of community talk like what Elizabeth had experienced. Similarly, when a woman commissionable encounter occurs, she often needs mentoring for support and guidance. What does she do? She seeks a more experienced person — a mentor.

Researching Mary invigorates a vision of hope from her divine assignment as one understands her family of origin and the life of a female Jew in a Greco-Roman society. The source of perceived low-self-esteem gives one a greater appreciation for the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) as Mary’s praise show that self-worth is validated by God choosing her to bear the Son of God. Thus, “Viewing Mary from a womanist maternal perspective allows the reader to examine issues of class, gender, and yes, motherhood specific to her.”²²

In reviewing the beautiful lyrics of the Magnificat one can discern Mary’s birth of self-worth in the sight of God. Descriptions of hope have resonated clearly for generations. In society today, women are accepting their call into ministry to glorify

²¹ Renita J. Weems, *Showing Mary: How Women Can Share Prayers, Wisdom, and the Blessings of God* (New York, NY: Warner, 2002), 31.

²² Crowder, *When Momma Speaks*, 74.

God with similar expressions of praise when confirmed by other women. Phrases continue to echo from the song: “My soul glorifies the Lord,” “he is mindful of the humble state of his servant,” “all generations will call me blessed,” and “His mercy extends to those who fear him.” It is clear Mary was liberated but needed guidance.

Further, Renita Weems says that the *Magnificat* was an expression of Mary being blessed. “The Magnificat is also important because of what it tells about Mary. It portrays Mary as a woman of deep passion. She expresses gratitude to God for elevating her, a poor girl from the working-class town of Nazareth, for making her name known throughout the generations, for working wondrously on her behalf and for doing so not only for her but for others like her as well.”²³

Mary the mother of Jesus depicts women for centuries, even today, who are given a divine mission in the world that is often devalued — even in the church. Black women build other individuals’ vision or ministerial assignments at will. However, answering and sustaining their call to leadership is hindered. In reflective agreement with one of Crowder’s earlier articles, she wrote, “Jews were free to worship and gather in synagogues at will. Women and girls were, perhaps, not so fortunate. Gender inequality and sexism had tentacles stretching from the macrocosm of Rome to the microcosm of Judaism.”²⁴ Cultural congruence mentoring is key during development of Black women as shown in the heartfelt message of praise in the *Magnificat*. It is in relational learning that the 4 C’s (courage, collaboration, conviction, and creativity) are

²³ Weems, *Showing Mary*, 190.

²⁴ Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder, “Mary: The Mother of Jesus,” *Just Women* 7, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 28.

activated as the exchange of wisdom ignites passion to birth ministry during conversation of equipping for success.

Typical mentorship is initiated when a person seeks counsel, encouragement, and support. Elizabeth knew barrenness, shame, fear, and possible depression. In this case, Elizabeth, a family member of Mary, was the perfect mentor who discerned the gift and calls on Mary's life. This is a perfect example of cultural congruence. In the church, we often recognize the call on one another's life; however, needed support and guidance are absent and spiritual bareness and abortions occur because of a lack of an adequate midwife to assist with delivering purpose. The midwife in this case is the mentor.

These two women in this passage celebrated and praised God for His favor to be called and birthed songs that have been sung for centuries. Elizabeth and Mary lived in a culture that was accepting of them being able to bare children; however, Elizabeth and Mary both probably protected the treasure that they both bore, delivered, and nurtured to maturity. Having one another no doubt assisted in the fruitfulness of their completing the assignment.

Today, we watch women praise God and celebrate their call and acceptance with hidden questions of how to proceed in leadership. Lack of mentorship establishes a foundation of stagnation and often end in the demise of the seed (fulfilling the call). This proposed project is to answer those questions through this doctoral thesis and project and will work to galvanize and sustain women into ministry from a culturally congruent perspective.

Major Themes of Text
Outline of selected passage to parallel with the mentor-mentee exchange

The announcement and acceptance of the call to the ministry of motherhood by both women Luke 1:26-38.

Similarly, today women are called to ministry and willingly accept the call desiring a relationship with a woman who can travel the journey with them. To clarify, traveling the journey with another does not require those training to do the work, but to walk alongside one as they do the work. It is important that the mentor is honest in terms of her ability to lead one who comes for mentoring. If they are unable to assist with her call, they should be willing to lead her to someone who can.

Mary visits (1:39-45) Elizabeth, and upon hearing Mary's voice, Elizabeth's baby leaps in her womb, as she is filled with the Holy Spirit. This is a blessing from Elizabeth for Mary: what an honor it is to be visited by the mother of the Messiah.

The natural response of a discerning potential mentor of the gifts and talents of a perspective mentee is confirmation. There is a connection of purpose and a desire to aide in the leadership development of the mentee. Mentors are readily available to exhort and walk along side of the individual with strategies, wisdom, knowledge, and experience to amplify self-awareness and intimacy with God for spiritual health and clarity of the call. It is recommended for any woman, especially a Black woman entering ministry, to develop a relationship to process conviction, courage, creativity, and how to collaborate. In his article "Pastoral Care and Counseling with Women Entering Ministry," Glover-Wetherington of Duke University asserts, "since the issues for Black women entering ministry pervade all spheres of life, many differing kinds of people are in positions to

offer them either assistance and pastoral care or some form of hinderance.”²⁵ This is very true and the very reason this project will prove retaining a mentor is necessary for Black women in ministry. Having the support, confidence in ability, guidance, and friendship are a few characteristics a good mentor offers when in turbulent stages of ministerial leadership. Being in the presence of another woman who honors your call blesses you, and you her. It increases faith and spiritual appetite.

Spiritual Maturation.

Sue Nilson Kibbey, in *The Open Road: The Adventure of Breakthrough Prayer Initiative*, stresses the importance of personal prayer efforts in leadership.²⁶ Mentorship provides spiritual support. It is during the time of prayer, praise, scripture reading, and celebration that the presence of God further infills the mentor and mentee supplying strength for the journey. Elizabeth, like a good mentor, provided spiritual direction to Mary in which both the mentor and mentee benefited. The relationship provides an exchange of power that motivates both to pursue goals. The relationship between the women in the pericope shows how a mentor catapults one into self-discovery to evolve into the leader God originally designed — fully equipped to sustain and build capacity to fulfil the call with joy. There is a spiritual expression of growth proclaimed in her prayer of praise.

²⁵ Miriam Anne Glover-Wetherington, “Pastoral Care and Counseling with Women Entering Ministry,” *Through the Eyes of Women: Insights for Pastoral Care*, ed. Jeanne Stevenson Moessner (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 66.

²⁶ Sue Nilson Kibbey, *The Open Road: The Adventure of Breakthrough Prayer Initiative* (Knoxville, TN: Market Square Publishing, LLC, 2021), 22.

Other exegetical themes of insight for Mary's seeking Elizabeth in the passage

1. Mary's current social location of marginalized to . . . Highly favored.
2. Mary's heart was troubled . . . why was she chosen?
3. Mary declares acceptance and faith is renewed . . . need human reassurance.
4. Mary sought a second opinion . . . Elizabeth's confirmation.
5. The three-month visitation could suggest Mary's discovery of selfcare, the baby and self-awareness as a wife and mother.
6. The relational learning provides stability pillars in her life for self-identity, self-care, and self-validation for sustainability and capacity building as the mother of the Messiah.

During the mentor-mentee time together, the angel's message is confirmed; Mary's faith is affirmed that God fulfills his promise. Their mentoring exchange of relational learning was three months. If they were not culturally congruent, I would argue the bonding time would have taken longer and the confirmation and affirmation would have been frustrated by the inequalities of their social locations and the issues they both were facing. Thus, this passage is an acceptable example of a matriarch mentoring legacy for leadership. It also provides a platform for the DMin project: A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model for Innovative Black Women's Efficacy in Leadership.

This model will prove the needed comradery that the "paring phenomena" provides for innovative women who are unable to obtain honor, respect, or adequate support and training in their context. Mentoring allows for private growth and public use in traditional and non-traditional leadership. The development of effective mentoring models will encourage female leaders to buy into relational training for suitability and capacity building of other females.

Conclusion

The proposed project for the doctoral program is a foundational platform to build a mentorship model for innovative Black women in ministerial leadership. The model of mentoring is specific to congruent culture. The passage in Luke 1:26-45 is an example of culturally congruent mentorship. The narrative provides an example of a seasoned woman being available to prepare a young woman to embrace her destiny as an unwed pregnant woman, with the possibility of losing her fiancé in a society that oppresses females. The interaction of the two women confirms effective mentor-mentee relationship, which equips and empowers one another for their leadership journey.

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The selected passage has a unique rendering of a womanist perspective in response to the news of conception in the middle of societal and personal challenges. They both acknowledged the gift in one another with rejoicing, honor, and encouragement to fulfill the call on their lives. Amidst the celebration, Mary wrestles, no doubt, with the same thoughts that Elizabeth did after being disgraced for so many years of barrenness with a husband (man of God) who did not believe her call to motherhood. This is a story of two women called to ministry and find strength to maintain conviction, courage, creativity, and collaboration which are the four C's of love and leadership.

Their narrative is a perfect depiction of a mentor-mentee relationship between a woman of experience in faith waiting for God to answer prayer through shame, rejection,

hurt, and possible depression. Elizabeth, an older woman, a local priest's wife with life and ministry experience, has much to offer. The other female, Mary, espoused to Joseph, is a younger woman called into leadership with many questions in this androcentric society. This doctoral project will guide women in ministry as a mentor and mentee exposing the pitfalls of inadequate usage of the relationship and offer tools to regain trust in others to lead them as mentees effectively. The project will afford the participants, whether mentor or mentee, a transformative exchange for innovative women in ministry. The vital foundation of support during the development of ministerial leadership includes a mentor with ample ability to build a relational foundation that promotes self-awareness with spiritual direction, healthy well-being, and skills for leadership.

The objective is to prove adequate mentor-mentee relationships are transformative for both the mentor and mentee when entered in the relationship with a give-and-gain perspective. The exchange between the two affords both the mentor and the mentee capacity to hone and develop new skills. Mentors who engage with strategic support leads the mentee on a self-discovery path to build sustainability and capacity in leadership skills. Elizabeth's response to Mary and baby John leaping inside her gave Mary an awareness of her worth to bridging the gap between man and God. It is during this first meeting that Mary began discovering purpose. Mentorship is a step toward self-discovery to accomplish God's assignment and solidified one's foundation of self-awareness to fulfill the call into ministry.

The tools for identifying one's self include: 1) understanding the vision of ministry which streamlines goals, 2) recognizing and owning personality type, the positive and negative tendency, 3) polishing personal leadership style, 4) pinpointing motivations gifts, and 5) learning to practice self-care to serve as fundamental pillars of

self-discovery for sustainability in leadership. Perhaps during the many conversations with Elizabeth and Mary, the candidate (mentee) suggests that Elizabeth was able to get Mary to look through new lens of who she was in her role in the fulfillment of the promise as she learned to care for her spirit, nurtured her body for the developing baby, and learned how to endure as a wife and mother from her cousin and mentor Elizabeth.

I enrolled in a women's leadership initiative at Central Baptist Theological Seminary MDiv program that assigned mentors to those who were not paired with culturally, same-minded mentors. This relationship failed multiple times. Those who were culturally congruent in the first year remained engaged with successful outcomes. In dialogue with the director of the said program, she agreed that she felt that was the problem with the first two years of the program. Cultural sensitivity and awareness are not enough while mentoring women in ministry. Culturally congruent mentor-mentee relationships foster lifelong relationships when appropriately cultivated.

Culturally congruent mentoring reflects the importance of trained mentors in ministry leadership as revealed in the narrative of Elizabeth and Mary. Having shared this Biblical Foundation, the next chapter will explore historical figures Harriet Tubman and Mary Magdalena Rita Lewis Tate. They demonstrated traditional and nontraditional ministerial mentoring during their life time. The Biblical legacy of Elizabeth and Mary continues today to resonate among women in leadership.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter of the doctoral thesis will capture two historical figures who portrayed a paradigm shift in leadership modeling culturally congruent mentoring of Black women and men. Each selected figure led innovatively with supportive strategic pedagogy in self-discovery to implement their vision. Through the lens of history, this chapter introduces historical figures who intersect with the proposed title, hypothesis, and biblical foundation of the project by identifying many of the characteristics of a mentor. In chapter two, Biblical Foundations, there is an observation and comparison of the lives of Elizabeth and Mary. This chapter highlights and discusses Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate and Harriet Tubman, two historically affluent African American women. The selection criteria of the historical figures were based on the period beginning with biblical times through 1921. Secondly, their innovative pursuits, personality and leadership styles were also significant components for their efficacy in leadership.

In attempting to narrow down a historical figure, I became intrigued by many women; however, I decided to highlight Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate and a brief discussion about Harriet Tubman's leadership styles coupled with my project theory of culturally congruent mentoring. These women guided other women along with them. They were unafraid to guide and share experiences to assist others on their journey of

purpose. Their mentoring empowered others in terms of self-identity, self-care, and self-validation as innovators. Mary L. Rampolla expressed, “As you begin to think about historical questions, you will find that your search will require you to explore a wide variety of sources.”¹ This search reflects on the history of their lives and how these historical figures are connected. While researching the period for this thesis and project, it became clear how understanding history is necessary for the current generation and those to come. This reflective thought has further encouraged me to pursue my project in culturally congruent mentorship among Black women who are leaders. After contemplation, I have come to realize that mentorship is a historical existential journey re-lived with another to encourage and support their journey.

Historical writings about Black women are filled with a reach into a legacy that is described by two profound African American women. Daina Ramey Berry and Nicole Gross assert,

To write a history about the United States from the perspective of Black women is to chart a course where the incredible, the fantastic, and the triumphant meet, mix, mingle often simultaneously with hardship, and terror. Although it largely defies uniformity, African American women’s history is marked by the ways that we have marched forward, against all odds, to effect sustained change, individually, local, and nationally. It is true that we embody the motto coined by Nannie Helen Burroughs for the school she headed in 1909: ‘We specialize in the Wholly impossible.’²

These iconic figures – Tate and Tubman – demonstrated innovation with unique talents to share wisdom, knowledge, and guide others with strength as they conquered many challenges. Yet, they encountered obstacles in various forms of leadership

¹ Mary L. Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Boston, MA: Bedford St. Martins Publisher, 2010), 8.

² Daina Ramey and Kali Gross, *A Black Women’s History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2020), 1.

oppression related to economics, race, and gender. How did these women become successful? Trudy Arriaga and her colleagues, in their book *Leading While Female: A Culturally Proficient Response for Gender Equity*, possibly provides answers: “Know your ‘why.’ Locate a mentor, and mentor emerging female leaders with intention.”³ Many agree with the advice and images of these historical figures. They “knew their why,” had a mentor, and led as a mentor. This example for females, as a novice or veteran, on the leadership pathway should learn to pay it forward as a mentor modeled by these historical figures. I submit that the selected historical figures believed they were predestined to lead others to a path of hope in pursuit of their vision. To know “your why” is the entrance into self-discovery and the key to courage, creativity, and conviction to follow purpose.

This doctoral project focused on culturally congruent mentoring of Black women in the vocation of ministry leadership. Ministerial leadership through the lens of this historical exploration will disclose two gifted women who multitasked in their work and being; in both church and outreach services, they were involved in building the community economically; they were also involved in social justice and church work while engaging the marginalized and unchurched. They were both traditional and nontraditional ministry leaders.

Women have many talents that span the areas of oral communication, authors, scientists, entrepreneurs, politicians, and you name it; women can do it all while adding

³ Trudy Arriaga et al., *Leading While Female: A Culturally Proficient Response for Gender Equity* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2020), 101-102

to the church's growth. "While African American women represent an estimated 66–88 percent majority in African American churches, men still tend to hold most leadership roles."⁴ Although females are the majority in the church, the disparity related to leadership remains high compared to men. Throughout history, women in ministry have continued to serve the needs of others and invested in the visions of others, while sometimes losing sight of personal vocation in the church.

Often, women allude to feeling inhumane because of their load and having no one to debrief on unloading the burden. Zora Neale Hurston succinctly stated in her book, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, how many Black women in ministry feel; simply stated, "Black Women Are The Mules Of The Earth."⁵ Women often function in such a symbolic capacity due to loss of identity and self-conceptualization. This nuance of lost sight of purpose is one of many reasons this project has been designed to look at the lives of the selected historical figures to reignite the possibility of sustainability as leaders.

Historically, many untold stories of women have carried the torch of leadership while traveling an uncharted path in pain, discouragement, and doubt with limited resources. The call deep within them, with encouragement from other females, kept them inspired and strengthened to continue the journey. This project aims further to prove how mentorship by innovative women like Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate and Harriet Tubman propelled many women to fulfill their purpose. These women were selected to explicitly

⁴ Alexis D. Abernathy, "Women's Leadership in the African American Church," Fuller Studio, <https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/womens-leadership-in-the-african-american-church/> in S. L. Barnes, "Whosoever Will Let Her Come: Social Activism and Gender Inclusivity in the Black Church," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 45 (2006): 371-87, doi:10.1111/J.1468-5906.2006.00312.X.

⁵ "Black Women are the Mules of the Earth – Nora Zeale Hurston," March 2, 2018, <https://nilelivingston.com/black-women-are-the-mules-of-the-earth>.

demonstrate the vital necessity of mentor-mentee bond among culturally congruent women in traditional and nontraditional ministerial leadership. In this project, conventional religious leadership will include pulpit ministry and practical outreach ministries that disciple communities. The nontraditional religious leadership will be referred to as parachurch organizations, nonprofit organizations, and social entrepreneurs. To further gain specific definitions of nontraditional ministries for this paper, I will succinctly show how the different types of nontraditional ministerial leadership are relevant to understanding the various roles Black women play, both in the church and community. Activist Cornell West confirms these thoughts,

Within the black community in the United States, women have been some of the most enterprising agents of tradition. Recognition of the variety of strong traditions that black women have established in the religious and secular affairs of their community have been obscured by sociologist's exclusive focus on family roles and black women's deviation from patriarchal expectations in a sexist and racist society.⁶

Historical Era

Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate and Harriet Tubman

Award-winning historians Daina Berry and Kali Gross, in their book *A Black Women's History of The United States*, reviewed the landscape of several eras and figures in the expansion of slavery (1820-1860); the demise of slavery (1860-1876); sex and the dawning of the black woman's suffrage (1876-1915); migration and depression (1915-

⁶ Cornel West and Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., eds., *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 629-630.

1940) headed to the era of black power, politics, and black feminism (Berry, 2020)⁷. The historical figures selected for this doctoral thesis and project lived in the late modern era from the 1750 to present. This period was also influenced by the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods with vast technological advancements.⁸ In addition, the Enlightenment Era came with diverse spiritual visionaries that moved the church and other religious institutions into a world known as a religious melting pot of thinkers and spiritual formations.

Movement During the Historical Period of Selected Figures

The surveillance of 100 years of this historical period reflects the movements of the era of Enlightenment, also called the Age of Reason (A.D. 1650 to A.D. 1800), the European Renaissance, and the beginning of Romanticism in the 19th century. The presence of the Holy Spirit's influence in the earth during the movements unleashed a cultural rebirth and an intellectual and spiritual awakening both spiritually and secularly. In the church all over the world, those who heard the call during the awakening responded to the voice of God by saying, "When God says move, I will be obedient," which is an act of faith in action. Studying their lives, many heard the echoes from Tate and Tubman's lives, "Here am I use me." They quickly learn to use available resources to accomplish the mission of the call, rise above failure, and improvise when necessary.

⁷ Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross, *A Black Women's History of The United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2020), viii.

⁸ "Historical Eras: List of Major Time Periods in History," <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/historical-eras-list-of-major-time-periods-in-history.html>.

Their leadership styles and personality types complemented their spiritual gifts and passions to be successful.

Historical Figure Overview

Research on the life of Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate was phenomenal in that I located her grandson, Dr. Meharry Lewis, the son of Felix Early Lewis. He is a retired professor of Tuskegee University who now lives in Tuskegee, Alabama. He is an amazing vibrant eighty-five-year-old editor and author of many of the sources of the historical findings of the figure in this chapter. Dr. Lewis shared, “My dad (we called him ‘Papa’) was passing down the verbal accounts of our heritage in and history of the church to my mother (‘Momma’ as we called her). After Papa’s death in 1968, Momma would put us through the same drills.”⁹ Much of what has been found in oral tradition was handed down through the family. Thus, one might note some bias in how some history is told. Please beware she has many names: Mary Lena, Mother Tate, Rita, Magdalena, Bishop Tate, and Miss Do Right. Pay close attention as she was married four times and divorced three — the reason for the multiple last names. While interviewing Dr. Lewis, it became obvious that his passion for supporting his family’s legacy and for women at large was evident¹⁰.

⁹ Mary Lena Lewis Tate, *Vision* (Nashville: TN: The New and Living Way Publishing Company, 2005), vii.

¹⁰ My research for this doctoral thesis led me to Dr. Meharry Lewis, the grandson of Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate. He shared his passion with me of the work of his grandmother and the history of the church.

The life of Mary Lena Lewis Tate is significant because the plight and fight of women in their thrust to gain full status as productive and recognized citizens in all aspects of our world society is not yet a *fait accompli*.¹¹

The accomplishment of this person is one among many milestones that must be recognized as significant in the struggle of women.

The second figure in this discussion will only receive a brief overview. Harriet Tubman, in spite of being limited by the oppression of slavery, nonetheless demonstrated mentorship that assisted many in gaining their freedom. She empowered freed men to collaborate with her lead and hide slaves on their journey to freedom. Biblically speaking, her embodiment was liken to Moses. “To many a slave yearning for freedom, Harriet Tubman was Moses, the deliverer.”¹² The examination of the life of Harriet Tubman reveals her life as a leader of others to freedom. Tubman used a network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.

These two women – pre-slavery and post-slavery – with the power of God, natural skills, and talents, trained and built relationships, impacted their society, and changed lives one person at a time. Tate and Tubman were leaders who mentored culturally congruently, changing the course of the lives of those that walked alongside them.

Mary Lena Lewis Tate (1871-1930)

Mary Lena Street was born free on January 5, 1871, to Belfield Street and Nancy (Hall) Street, whose parents were enslaved. She was “born in the engulfing aftermath of

¹¹ Tate, *Vision*, 2.

¹² Rebecca P. Janney, *Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Faith* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1999), 13.

American slavery with all of its attendant bruises and scars.”¹³ Mary Magdalena was one of nine children in a blended family. Both parents had been previously married. The covenant of Belfield and Nancy birthed four girls: Mary Magdalena, Martha Elizabeth, Dora Louvenia, and Queen Esther Caroline. They began their lives in a small farm town of Dickson, Tennessee. Mary Magdalena was the first girl born in the family. “The boys felt proud that they had a baby sister to take care of; the parents felt a sense of well rounding of their family with the addition of a member of the female sex among their offspring.”¹⁴

Her family were landowners and successful farmers. The Street’s skill set was vast in agriculture, canning, and business marketing. Incidentally, Mr. Street (Pa Bell) could not read and write. Regardless, “He was quick to learn and never missed a figure in his method of ‘counting’ money.”¹⁵ The girls were informally educated by their mother, who could read and write, with the addition of training in religion, politics, and social skills. Mary Magdalena’s parents’ abilities would later empower her communication, leadership style, and entrepreneurial capacities.

The family would soon move to Vanleer, a city in Tennessee about eight miles from an iron-fabricating center, the Cumberland Furnace; it was an industrial site founded by Tennessee’s well-known iron mogul, Montgomery (Bell).¹⁶ Mary Lena’s

¹³ Tate, *Vision*, 1.

¹⁴ Tate, *Vision*, 102.

¹⁵ Tate, *Vision*, 102.

¹⁶ Meharry Lewis and Helen Lewis, *The Church of the Living God, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Inc. Eighty-Fifth Anniversary Yearbook 1903-1988* (Nashville: TN: The New and Living Way Publishing Company, 2002), 9.

formative years of education included academics and creativity for survival and organization as she watched her parents and assisted in their many endeavors.

Nancy (Hall) Street, Mary Lena's mom, was a slave worker at a White finishing school called Clover Dale where she learned manners, reading, writing, music and other skills she taught her children at home.¹⁷

The Vanleer community was growing so fast that the city could not provide schooling for all the Colored children. However, this did not stop the Streets. Their home became a school as children of all races learned together playing school, not realizing their differences. As Mary Magdalena matured, she developed a charisma to network, collaborate, and attract people of all races to her service in the woods, homes, and churches. As she grew older, Mary Magdalena showed that she had always been an overachiever, even with the household chores of cleaning and laundry. Watching her mother's fragile body become weaker – dying at age of forty-two – Mary Magdalena, the oldest daughter, was left to care for her aging father and siblings. She grew up fast and became focused on the farm, scripture reading, and continued caring for her nearly sixty-year-old father. Mary Lena was not interested in marriage, but when her family discovered David Lewis, a migrant family's son interested in her, Pa Bell encouraged his daughter to be wedded.

On January 5, 1888, she married David Lewis, an industrial worker at the furnace. In their union, she birthed two sons: Walter Curtis Lewis and Felix Early Lewis. These young boys would become instrumental in developing what we now know as The Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Inc. (CLGPGT). During the early life of the young Lewis family, they resided in Dickson, Tennessee. Although Mary

¹⁷ Interview with grandson Meharry Lewis, March 3, 2022.

Magdalena was introduced to topics of religion by her parents, there is no mention of a family church membership until the wedding of her first husband, David Lewis, a Methodist. Mary Lena was now a seventeen-years old with unusual community influence. Her father was happy to see the birth of his grandchildren on his land. She and her husband inherited her father's land upon his death.

Mary Lena began to see a difference between what was preached and how the Methodists lived as Christians. It was during this first-hand observation and reflection of organized religion that, according to Meharry Lewis, her grandson, "the precepts of organized (Methodist) religion and the observable inconsistent practice of its proponents place the young bride in a state of cognitive dissonance."¹⁸ One might agree that this was when she began to "search for existential meaning in her own life."¹⁹ As an inquisitive young woman, she continued to read all that was available to her. Sources included the Bible and teachings from her family during the post-slavery period.

Mary Magdalena Lewis's initial call to ministry was not one of the lights or a dream. Instead, history reveals she stumbled into attempting to bridge the gap of understanding religion and what was practiced in her community.

Mary Lena Lewis did not start out to found or organize a church. The objective of her early ministry seems to have been merely to point out to other young people in the community who were, perhaps, her neighbors and peers that there was an obvious (and annoying) gap between what was espoused as religion and what was commonly practiced among the adherents in this community of believers.²⁰

¹⁸ Lewis and Lewis, *The Church of the Living God*, 10.

¹⁹ Lewis and Lewis, *The Church of the Living God*, 10

²⁰ Lewis and Lewis, *The Church of the Living God*, 10.

Her unique abilities as a female leader and the growth of crowds became apparent to the male ministers and her husband. She was challenged to discontinue her teachings as the men demanded a resolution to the widespread of her teaching community to community. This new posture as a female leader was the beginning of signs of martial failure of the first marriage. Topics of many of her presentations centered around the New Testament issue of women leaders and speakers in the church. Second, she espoused the notion of “cleanness,” which later was exchanged to the use of “holiness,” a lifestyle of practice that should, in her opinion, match the religion read in the Bible. The focus was on behaviors such as tobacco chewers, pipe and cigar smokers, profanity users, and constant brawlers. The concept of holiness “remained central to her theological exposition through her ministry.”²¹

Her notoriety grew as her spirituality deepened. Mary Magdalena Lewis would fast from food and liquids for days as she strengthened her faith. According to Meharry Lewis’s biography, the impact of preaching and faith healing not only attracted African Americans to her services but also whites and non-believers for prayer for healing. Followers began to call her Mother Mary Lena, probably because there was not a name to label her during this time as a female minister. Her travel spanned Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Alabama, and sites on the east coast such as New York and Philadelphia, often by boat. She was not only known for fiery preaching but was gifted with administration.

Between 1895 and 1902, Mary Magdalena Lewis’s travel created cell-like groups known as “The Do Rights.”²² Mary Magdalena Lewis was nicknamed by childhood

²¹ Tate, *Vision*, 10.

²² Pricilla Pope-Levison, “Blackpast,” <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/tate-mary-magdalena-lewis-1871-1930/>.

friends “Miss Do Right,” which one might consider a form of prophecy in terms of the groups later formed for her followers who were called “The Do Rights.”

In 1903, the true name of God’s latter-day House was revealed to her through her youngest son, Felix Early, and Mary Lena Lewis endeavored to re-organize the ‘Do Rights’ groups into regular church bands, which she did. These groups became known as ‘The Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and Ground of the Truth.’²³

The foundational scriptures, for the name of the church, were “divinely inspired and revealed (Genesis 28:16-22 and II Timothy 3:15).”²⁴ The First General Assembly was held in 1908. It was a gathering of all the groups that Mary Magdalena convened. She was ordained as overseer of The Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and the Ground of the Truth.

Lifestyle

The balance between family and ministry is one that the historical material available did not disclose. Mary Magdalena is known to have followed a rigorous dietary regimen. She consumed nothing that contained wine, pork, grapes, catfish, alcohol, narcotics sedatives, aspirin, etc. She considered such things “unclean” and contributory to physical illnesses and spiritual weakness within the membership.²⁵ It can only be assumed that she did not have total self-care looking at photos; she was morbidly obese and thought to have uncontrolled diabetes. The females that she mentored, as well as men, wore black suits with white shirts. The women’s attire in photographs is particularly

²³ Lewis and Lewis, *The Church of the Living God*, 13.

²⁴ Tate, *Vision*, 170.

²⁵ Tate, *Vision*, 185.

interesting: black suit jacket, white collar shirt with a tie, and long skirt. Her mentoring included diet and home lifestyle which pointed to “dress, speech, social gatherings, games and gaming, making and paying of vows, and many other related behaviors—stressed probation, temperance, and total abstinence by those in the church.”²⁶

Family

Research points out that her two sons, with tears in their eyes, were often left behind as she traveled, many times on a boat from, the banks of the Ohio River. She would marry two more times as she did not tolerate “uncleanness.” She was married to one found unclean. The men during this time suffered embarrassment because of her fame. Her husbands were either a deacon or minister, but the people sought after Mary Magdalena. What that looked like in those marriages is not accessible in the literature. One can only surmise. Her husbands in order of marriage were David Lewis, Elijah Estes, and Robert Tate. Some literature states she was married four times and divorced three times. In this research and the interview of her grandson, the said names are all that were available and there appears to have been two divorces — Lewis and Estes. In an interview with Meharry Lewis, he stated, “Mother Tate called her husband her helper.”²⁷ Many might want to have a conversation today on the biblical views of her interpretation of helpmate.

The progression of her leadership escalated, spanning twenty states and the District of Columbia. She established many churches and schools. Mary Magdalena

²⁶ Tate, *Vision*, 185.

²⁷ Interview with grandson Meharry Lewis, March 7, 2022.

demonstrated both traditional and nontraditional ministry. The years 1908-1918 were ones of rapid growth and expansion. Her industrial and marketing skills gained from her parents are seen in creating jobs and institutions to build community and provide economic growth. In addition, her financial aptitude and negotiation abilities helped the church acquire land.

Tate trained men in the leadership of churches she established per their request. The men recognized how effective her administrative skill set was as she navigated through courts for charters and business endeavors. This mentorship was short-lived as history reveals she would disagree with continuing this training when she could establish and lead the churches herself or select a man or woman under her oversight. The need grew where she began to train more women, friends, sisters, and daughters-in-law to lead the congregations. Keep in mind she did have two sons who aided with the organization and were ministers. However, she found women were more loyal to the doctrine and church logistics. Loyalty to the church's tradition was vital to her as is seen in the publications and documents written. To ensure the doctrine and Christian education were consistent in all the churches, a publishing house was built in 1923. At this point, Bishop Tate "chose Nashville, Tennessee, for her denomination headquarters, and in 1923, with approval, the denomination purchased eleven 50X140 city lots for \$5,000, including a large brick building with five rooms."²⁸

²⁸ Pope-Levison, "Blackpast."

The Restless Years

Mary Magdalena was protective of the organization's name and would not allow it to be used easily, even if the leaders wanted to establish churches under her jurisdiction. Soon after the General Assembly of the CLGPGT, the church began to experience splits, resulting in the restless years. Simon Crooms and his brother Quincy, leaders in CLGPGT, decided to split from Mother Tate. In 1913, the Crooms wanted to maintain the appearance of CLGPGT, using founding scripture and adding to the name "First Born Church of the Living God, Inc. in Georgia." Similarly, after being thoroughly trained by Mother Tate, a young man severed ties in 1918, establishing "The House of God of the Living God, Inc in Philadelphia." The two new organizations were not under Mother Tate's leadership. They simply added a phrase in front of or the end of the new name, The Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and Ground of the Truth, as an extension of their church names.

In 1930, Bishop Mary Magdalena Tate died due to diabetes, frost-bitten toes, and phlebitis in Philadelphia. She was originally buried in her hometown of Dickson, Tennessee; she was later exhumed, and her final resting place is in Nashville, Tennessee, the city where the headquarter for The Church of the Living God, the Pillar, and Ground of the Truth is located.

Between 1930 and 1962, fourteen more state charters were granted to establish the Church of God under Mother Magdalena. Four more states were added to the Church of God roster by 1981. By 1992, some forty-three states and Jamaica were chartered by the Church of God. Today, three chief overseers lead fourteen states each. The doctrine

and the church name would continue long after Mary Magdalena Tate died through the pages of publications and songs:

1. *The Decree Book*
2. *Shall Women Lead, Preach, Preside Local and General Overseer of the flock of God?* (2 volumes)
3. *Mary Lena Lewis Tate: Collected Letters and Manuscripts (1903-2003)*
4. Sunday School literature
5. Her music
6. Periodicals often referenced as yearbooks
7. *Mary Lena Lewis Tate: Vision a Biography*
8. Legacy of greater than 400 women ordained, not including men
9. The church continues today over 100 years later²⁹

Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate's grandson, Dr. Meharry L. Lewis, continues to write and distribute books and promote her legacy and doctrine in the church and various mediums. Her leadership style continues, years after the death of Bishop Mary Magdalena Street Lewis Estes Tate in 1930, as others pass forward her training.

The Birth of the Dominion Houses

Initially, the Chief Overseer was administered to all churches; however, no successor was legally documented after Bishop Tate's death. The decree book instructed to pray and fast as a church, and God would tell the church who would lead within a month. It was nearly two years before it was decided to have three overseers for regions housed in dominion.

- Lewis Dominion, led by (son of Bishop Tate): The Church of the Living God, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Inc.,
- Keith Dominion, led by (daughter-in-law of Bishop Tate): The Church of the Living God, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Without Controversy, Inc.,

²⁹ Interview with grandson Meharry Lewis, March 7, 2022.

- Jewell Dominion, led by (step-daughter of Bishop Tate): The Church of the Living God, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Without Controversy, Inc.,
- God, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, Which He Purchased With His Blood, Inc.³⁰

Today, the church continues to be divided into “Dominion House” that honors Bishop Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate as the founding overseer. These groups have been and are led by women trained by Bishop Tate or her successors. In 2009, a book was published titled *Mary Lewis Tate: Thundering Daughters*, showcasing over 400 women ordained during and after her lifetime up to the centennial year of the church’s existence.

There is no way in this document to fully tell many of the details of Mary Lewis Tate’s life; however, there are some essential facts that must be said as the church and the enterprises continue today. Two scriptures are attributed to Mary Magdalena’s gift: Jeremiah 31:22 and Habakkuk 2:3. She has been described as “The Woman who compassed a man,” which is a part of the title in her biography *VISION*.³¹

Marvin Andrew McMickle, in the *Encyclopedia of African American Christian Heritage*, wrote, “Tate was known to have over 900 persons converted in service through her preaching at one service. She held many titles and was baptized in 1908 and accepted ordained as a Bishopric in 1908.”³² This historical figure “climaxed her career as a world evangelist of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Mother Mary Magdalena Tate died on December

³⁰ Meharry H. Lewis, *Mary Lena Lewis Tate: Thundering Daughters: The First One Hundred Years, Ordained Women Preachers – A Black Female Legacy* (Nashville, TN: The New and Living Way Publishing Company, 2009), 361.

³¹ Lewis, *Vision*, iii.

³² Marvin A. McMickle, “Mary Magdalena Tate, Minister born,” in *Encyclopedia of African American Christian Heritage*, AAREG, <https://aaregistry.org/story/mary-magdalena-tate-a-vibrant-minister/>.

28, 1930, buried in the family plot in her hometown, Dickson, Tennessee.”³³ Her leadership style, personality, and gifts were critical to her success and challenges as a leader during her lifetime and continue to build capacity and sustain the organization. She was a traditional and nontraditional leader.

Harriet Tubman (March 1821-March 10, 1913)

Tubman was an American abolitionist, spy, nurse, suffragette, and political activist. She was born into slavery as Araminta “Minty” Ross on the Thompson Plantation in 1820 in Dorchester County, Maryland.³⁴

The symbolism of freedom in this doctoral thesis through literary research will confirm the valued support of mentorship as a force of liberation when one answers the call to leadership. Harriet Tubman’s life demonstrated the influence of women serving as servant leaders with supportive passion, discernment, experience, and resource guide through hindering obstacles of slavery to freedom. This doctoral thesis and project intersect her life like that of Mary Magdalena Tate, uncovering the importance of the 4 C's she embodied as a leader to achieve personal goals and lead others to accomplish their goals. The “4C's (Courage, Conviction, Creativity, and Collaboration) are pillars of leadership with love and fortitude to lead others to their freedom.”³⁵

³³ AAREG, “Mary Magdalena Tate, Minister born,” <https://aaregistry.org/story/mary-magdalena-tate-a-vibrant-minister/>.

³⁴ Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (New York, NY: Random House, 2004), xvi.

³⁵ Karynthia Phillips, *She Writes for Him: Black Voices of Wisdom* (Enumclaw, WA: Redemption Press, 2021), 25.

Harriet began using her mother's name early; it did not become official until after marrying a free man, John Tubman, in 1844.³⁶ The marriage presented many challenges that did not afford her freedom or proper respect as his wife. It was visible that this young woman was different from the other slave girls as she grew up on the plantation. Her first assisted slave escape at thirteen years old led to a debilitating head injury that resulted in two months of laying in the Ross cabin delirious after being hit in the head with two-pound metal weight from the store scale. "She crumpled to the floor as though dead. The impact fractured her skull and created a great convex dent."³⁷ It became a mysterious handicap — a form of narcolepsy. During her many loss of consciousness episodes, she received instructional visions. Her family and friends began to reverence the episodes as directions from God.

Although Mr. Tubman, a free slave who could read and write, was satisfied residing with Harriet in slave quarters, he did not appear to value his freedom as those who desired freedom like Harriet. Furthermore, Harriet was discontent with enslavement and barrenness. In consideration of the biblical foundation focus on Elizabeth (barren for years) and Mary (unmarried with child), both present with an oppressive type of bondage. Like Harriet, these women did not allow their circumstances to inhibit their answering the call of God on their lives.

Harriet Tubman is an example of a traditional and nontraditional mentor as she led by show and tell. She expounded the scriptures and was a social justice activist.

³⁶ Jean M. Humez, *Harriet Tubman: The Life and the Life Stories* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 15.

³⁷ Rebecca P. Janney, *Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Faith* (Minneapolis, MI: Bethany House Publishers, 1999), 17.

The linear thread of this project is to develop an innovative mentor-mentee leadership model for women ministers, both formally and informally, trained to serve effectively.

One can sense the serenity of Harriet's self-identification and purpose in a statement made during an interview with journalist Benjamin Drew.

Now that I've been free I know what a dreadful condition slavery is. I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but ain't never seen one who was willing to go back and be a slave. Slavery is the next thing to hell. If a person would send another person into bondage; he would be bad enough to send them to hell if they could.³⁸

The leadership style that Mary Magdalena and Harriet modeled is the director, including some inspirational, diplomate, and analytical innovative leadership qualities. Harriet was direct and to the point when leading the enslaved person to freedom. Research reveals her threatening to kill some of the passengers of the underground railroad if they did not follow her directions as instructed.

The inspirational component of her leadership is heard in her messages as a song in the field, along the riverbanks, and going into hiding. She also ministered hope after her unconscious sleep episode and awaken with the assurance that the journey would be complete. Harriet's spiritual formation practices stabilized those traveling to freedom that God was with them. "As Harriet's physical strength slowly improved, her resolve against slavery deepened."³⁹ Tubman's courage, conviction, and creativity gave her collaboration skills leverage to gain influence and respect from other abolitionists to assist in the escape of those who came alongside her to freedom. It is impossible in this document to give a detailed account of the journey and challenges of this heroine leading others to freedom.

³⁸ Humez, *Harriet Tubman*, 25.

³⁹ Janney, *Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Faith*, 17.

However, it is recorded in history that “Moses,” as she was also called, helped more than 300 enslaved people to escape to freedom.

After exploring the life of Harriet Tubman, one may agree with author Rebecca Janney’s mention of seven remarkable characteristics about Tubman. These seven characteristics speak to modeling mentoring leadership ability. They are (1) close relationship to God, (2) lack of bitterness against those who persecuted her, (3) cheerful, optimistic spirit, (4) iron-clad resolve to fulfill the unique mission God had given her, (5) sacrificial giving, (6) way of bringing blacks and whites together, and (7) imperfections.⁴⁰ These qualities are core to Black women who lead as mentors.

Early in this discourse, it was mentioned that Harriet represents a nontraditional minister in leadership. Her platform was different and many: the backwoods, from the helm of a military boat, from her home that she turned into a hospital after the Civil War, from public civic halls promoting freedom — all of this was done while mentoring women curious about her life.

She was invited to come to their city and attended the sewing circle, where twenty or thirty of them were gathered together. They asked her many questions, and she told stories, sang songs, danced, and imitated the talk of the Southern Negroes; and went away loaded with many tokens of the kind interest of these ladies.⁴¹

An example of culturally congruent mentoring in a circle of trust with Tubman was demonstrated when women from various churches interested in learning about her leadership requested to sit at her feet.

⁴⁰ Janney, *Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Faith*, 11.

⁴¹ Sarah Hopkins Bradford, *Harriet, the Moses of her People* (New York, NY: J. J. Little & Company, 1901), 73.

Conclusion

This historical foundation paper is written to introduce innovative historical leaders who strategically supported Black women in self-discovery that built capacity and sustainability in their context. This thesis is designed to bridge the biblical and historical figures to create a lattice network that supports the hypothesis. The hypothesis suggests if women in ministry lead as mentors, it will facilitate a circle of trust that encourages the mentee to engage in self-discovery training that transforms stagnant women into confident, effective contextual leaders.

The thesis also reveals how self-awareness of personality types, leadership style, identification of spiritual gifts, and social skills are transformative when leading others, as seen in the lives of Tate and Tubman. The importance of a mentor understanding their role after achieving their freedom (clarity of vision and plan) and reaching back to extend assistance to others self-discovery are the sources of perpetuating goals of progression in the lives of those seeking holistic leadership transformation.

The women in this historical paper represent African American women across the trajectory of the leadership paradigm shifts. Their life reveals tools for capacity building and sustainability with effective mentorship for Black women called to pulpit ministry and nonprofit organizations (social entrepreneurship). The caveat of capacity building and sustainability is learning to position four building blocks: courage, conviction, creativity, and collaboration. However, having the foundation and pillars clearly defined aids in the infrastructure of self-discovery that empowers one to lead with love, confidence, and camaraderie in a circle of trust in the relationship with a mentor.

One of the major problems Black women face in leadership is a lack of culturally congruent mentorship to respond to issues and thrive in leadership. I agree with Angie Ward's statement,

The question is not *whether* we will experience challenges in following our calling, but *what kind* of challenges we will experience and *how* we will respond to them.⁴²

Strategies for responding to these challenges are acquired during the cycle of leadership development that includes sitting at the table with mentors — more specifically, culturally congruent mentors.

In a previous live case study as a participant, I observed three scenarios that challenge non-congruent relationships of mentor-mentee. Inversely, it was shown how culturally congruent mentoring flourishes easier because those barriers do not present as inhibitions in culturally congruent mentoring. The three blockages of non-congruent mentoring are:

1. Initial bonding time too long between the two women (often never bond)
2. The high incident of misunderstandings (body language/colloquialism)
3. The mentor is unable to relate to the pain and goals of the mentee⁴³

I experienced these three barriers while enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at Central Baptist Theological Seminary's (CBTS) "Women's Leaders Initiative" cohort. This was a mentorship program. In the summer of 2021, in conversation with the program's mentor coordinator at CBTS, she endorsed my observation. She agreed with those barriers that were blockading practical mentor-mentee training. There was a high

⁴² Angie Ward, "When Your Calling Is Challenged," <https://www.christianitytoday.com/partners/nav-press/when-your-calling-is-challenged.html>.

⁴³ These observations came about from the experiences and observations that Karynthia Phillips gleaned while attending a Central Baptist Theological Seminary (CBTS) "Women's Leaders Initiative" Master of Divinity Cohort in 2021.

turnover when pairing Hispanics and Whites, and Blacks and Whites — taking two years to get more than half of the students paired congruently. Many students withdrew from the program. The students like me and one other Black female, initially paired with a culturally congruent mentor, remained in the relationship for four years and are still being mentored. The coordinator identified that improperly mentorship pairing led to many withdrawals and the need to recruit more women.

The historical figures selected are catalysts for women's empowerment to seek mentoring without fear of exploitation by another woman. There are male mentors in the church who exploit. Jacquelyn Grant posits, "The experience and contributions of women to Christianity and Church History have been ignored, distorted and repressed with a patriarchal bias substituted."⁴⁴ This paper is designed to provide a model for effective mentor relationships from woman-to-woman. The conflict of the role of women in the church has become a power struggle. Mentor-mentee relationships assist in learning submission and humility. Petersen and Shreeves said, "But this struggle should not be about power (though, too often, it is). Followers of Jesus should understand that leadership means service, not prestige. Christian men and women alike need to submit to God's calling-wherever that might lead."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Jacquelyn Grant, "White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response," Academy Series No. 64, ed. Susan Thistlethwaite (Atlanta: GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 69. Except from Judy Gere and Virginia Mills, "95 Theses on Patriarchal Oppression of Women," Compiled by the Task Force on Women in the Presbyterian Church, *Moving Toward Full Personhood: A six-session seminar on the Changing status of women*.

⁴⁵ Randy Peterson and Robin Shreeves, *The One Year Women In Christian History Devotional* (Carol Streams: IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2014), np.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The project's thematic idea suggests the necessity of mentorship with culturally supportive pedagogy for women in ministry to establish sustainability and capacity-building skills in response to entering their contextual vocation. Through the lens of theology, the project suggests mentors have a clear conviction of their theological perspective that inspires and guides their ministerial commission and passion for leading and training others. Mentoring is a form of teaching. Teachers who are innovative have "value-creating" capacity. "Value-creating" is a term coined by Daisaku Ikeda. He is a Japanese scholar who asserts that "Value-creating education and human education is needed to liberate learners from unconscious living enabling them to connect with others and the world around them."¹ People who practice value-creating are often seen among persons using alternative learning methods for the marginalized. This is innovation training, and at its best, it is mentoring.

In conjunction with my current social location, critical reflection on my spiritual autobiography confirms the importance of self-discovery and the development of

¹ Paula Estrada Jones, "Value Creating Education Philosophy and the Womanist Discourses of African American Women Educators," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education* 9 (2020): 105-106.

thinking theologically to affirm my “why” as a minister. A seasoned leader mentors others through the trajectory of self-discovery and theological identification for contextual leadership; the mentor must have adopted a theological position and value self-awareness. The mentor can leverage her culture, personal experience, and training as she walks alongside the mentee. At the same time, the mentee acquires her revelation of who God is concerning her spirit, mind, and body. I am in agreement with C. S. Lewis, who wrote, “Think of me as a fellow patient in the same hospital who, having been admitted a little earlier, could give some advice.”² The mentee’s discovery of what is salient aids in the maturity of self-awareness and constructing her theology as a portion of the foundation of sustainability to produce lasting fruit.

Why is it important to know one’s theology? I submit, when in pursuit of Kingdom building, it requires assurance of the discerned availability of the divine enterprise and how to appropriate those resources as one utilizes their skills, gifts, and personal measure of faith to fulfill the God given assignment(s) as a ministerial leader in partnership with God.

Mentorship is a resource for learning and identifying with one’s theology. Dr. Dexter Cannon said leadership theology “identifies how you see and interpret God in the midst of leadership.”³ The project has numerous theological possibilities to select from; however, in this project the researcher is unable to teach a course in theology. Thus, I have reviewed: Black theology, liberation theology, feminist theology, womanist

² C. S. Lewis, “LIBQUOTES,” <https://libquotes.com/c-s-lewis>.

³ Dexter Cannon, “Innovative Leadership Conference,” Spartanburg, South Carolina, March 26, 2022.

theology, practical theology, and cultural anthropology theology in a quest to provide a balanced template for modeling and mentoring Black female innovative leaders.

Overview

This chapter will achieve foundational caveats on the intrinsic importance of thinking theologically as a Black woman in traditional and non-traditional contextual spaces of ministry. The chapter will focus on womanism, citing parallels and contralateral differences with feminism, including brief elaborations on the ideology of practical theology. The theological schools of thought were selected to cultivate the readers' understanding and use in mentoring culturally congruent women in ministry in a quasi-incubator (circle of trust cohort). These supportive pedagogical practices promote self-discovery for sustainability in a traditional and non-traditional vocational context.

These schools of thought are necessary to solidify why I argue that culturally congruent leadership-equipping is compulsory among women of Color in traditional and non-traditional ministries. The art of Black women navigating others in a quasi-incubator with supportive pedagogical practices with other seasoned women supplies ingredients for self-discovery steps. The support aids the mentee in developing personal core ideologies of self-defining assurance to lead effectively while building capacity for sustainability. Why is self-discovery important? As Joan D. Chittister stated in her book, *The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman's Life*, all women experience: “(1) loss, (2) change, (3) transformation, (4) aging, (5) independence, (6) respect, (7) recognition, (8) insight, (9) empowerment, (10) self-definition, (11) invisibility, and (12)

fulfillment.”⁴ Leading as a mentor with knowledge of theology protects women from experiencing these moments alone, offering hope through their stories, support, and guidance. In agreement with Kelly Douglas’s statement, “historical dialogue is especially important for Black female students. It is through dialogue that they can discover that their own struggle is not simply personal but reflects a wider historical experience.”⁵ In the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentee will begin to recognize and conceptualize her theology. Identifying her theology will serve as one of the core pillars she will reference when responding to the “twelve moments” or making personal decisions and leading others.

The hypothesis is if women in ministry are paired with mentors of the same culture, then transformative self-discovery is enhanced. Thus, women who lead as mentors, a type of midwife, will facilitate support during any of those “twelve moments.” The relationship will birth assurance in the vision for both novice and stagnant women ministers. They will become content, confident, and see measurable success as ministry leaders. Integrating theological views during mentorship will challenge the mentee to identify her position in society, the church, and worldview related to her personally and her overall impact on humanity.

Considering perspectives of classical and current theological views, this chapter will discuss how both categories of theological views enhance the project. The idea of aiding in self-efficacy is dependent on the mentor creating relevant theological dialogue

⁴ Joan D. Chittister, *The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman’s Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), vii.

⁵ Kelly Brown Douglas, “Teaching Womanist Theology: A Case Study,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 135.

and monologue to provoke the mentee to critically think and determine their theology in conversation, reading scholarly material, and reviewing their life experiences.

The theological themes will suffice for critical thinking regarding vocation, context, and leadership style. The theological themes selected are womanist, complimented with Black theology, cultural anthropology, and practical theologies. Each supports the project by providing a guideline for awareness of God in the community and aid in modeling the percepts of adopted theology in leadership. Mentoring is an experience of communal theology. Monica Coleman asserts, “Postmodern womanist theology focuses on the teaching and healing communities that learn from the past in order to creatively transform the world.”⁶ Coleman suggests the importance of sharing your story to perpetuate survival as an individual and in the community as a model in mentoring. Theology offers a survival technique when one’s hears the story of God moving in the lives of others via mentoring. Thus, owning one’s theology affords clarity of purpose, strength, and survival techniques as one learns to articulate and act upon their theological view.

Theology is a vast subject to cover; thus, I would like to apprise you of the obstacles of terms having multiple meanings that impact an individual’s decision on which one to adopt. For example, “should a writer be assumed to be a womanist because she is Black?” “Should others think she is a lesbian because one of the definition descriptions of a womanist has a sexual affinity for women?” Likewise, Coleman et al.

⁶ Monica A. Coleman, *Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: 1517 Media Fortress Press, 2008), 125.

posed the question during a roundtable discussion: “Must I Be Womanist?”⁷ One must be careful in assuming any theological position of Black women. Also, it is important to note and parse terminology for this chapter and during discourse between leading mentors.

Key Terminology

Womanist Theology

In its most basic meaning, womanist theology is seen “as articulated by women of Color. It is a way for women to claim their roots, define themselves, embrace and consciously affirm their cultural and religious traditions as well as their own embodiment. A primary concern is for liberation from all forms of oppression.”⁸ Alice Walker, in her definition, “describes womanist as ‘a black feminist or feminist of color.’”⁹ The 1983 definition in the front matter of Alice Walker’s essay, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose,” gives definitions. Without defining feminist, except as a type of comparison of both womanist and feminist in definitions: “‘Womanist is to feminist as purple to lavender.’”¹⁰

⁷ Monica A. Coleman and Katie G. Cannon, “Roundtable Discussion: Must I be Womanist? (with Response),” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 22, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 85.

⁸ Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 304.

⁹ Coleman and Cannon, “Roundtable Discussion: Must I be Womanist,” 86.

¹⁰ Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc., 1983), xi-xii; Nyasha Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), xiii.

Feminist Theology

Feminist theology can be viewed as “The variety of theological perspectives developed to focus on the experiences, needs, and concerns of women. The differing forms emerge out of the common recognition of women’s oppression. They critique patriarchy and emphasize the role of women’s experience in the quest for justice and liberation.”¹¹

Black Theology

Black theology is “A twentieth-century North American theological movement. It interprets Scripture and the Christian gospel from the context of the oppression of black people engaged in the struggle for spiritual, social, economic, and political liberation.”¹²

Practical Theology

Practical theology is the “critical reflection on the church’s life in both corporate and individual expressions. Often included are disciplines such as Christian education, homiletics, liturgics, and pastoral care. More broadly it relates to sanctification and living the Christian life. It has also been called practical divinity.”¹³

¹¹ McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 104.

¹² McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 31.

¹³ McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 215.

Tri-axis Theology

A triad (of tri-axis theology) provides a rubric that allows an intersectionality of womanist, feminist, and practical theological perspectives. Tri-axis is a trilateral amalgam that expands broadly. It is as “purple is to lavender,” suggesting we are all women of different shades with different experiences seeking a voice that express our identity, need for consistent self-care, validation to practice and model freely social justice, and equality in the church and community.

Quasi-Incubator

A quasi-incubator is a paradigm on how “Corporate America provides leadership training in buildings with multiple cubical to mentor and coach start-up businesses in leadership and entrepreneurship for success”¹⁴ The researcher defines quasi-incubator in the context of Beyond Boundary Consulting (BBC) mentoring as a space not confined to brick and mortar, but a room whose walls are created by participants’ support and confidentiality as a virtual safe space for professional leadership development. In the cohort of BBC, relationships via nurturing mentorship, training, and fellowship are the secure walls of the quasi-incubator for sustainability and self-efficacy in leadership.

¹⁴ David A. Lewis, Elsie Harper-Anderson, and Lawrence A Molnar, “Incubating Success: Incubation Best Practices That Lead to Successful New Ventures,” <https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/ineap/Incubating-Success-Report.pdf>.

Cultural Congruence

The term cultural congruence is most often used in health care.

Cultural consciousness can be defined as developing awareness of culture in self, which can result in expanding understandings of culture and developing deeper cultural knowledge about other individuals and contexts.¹⁵

Cultural congruence in this context can be understood as the set of shared attitudes, values, beliefs, behavioral standards, goals, and practices that characterize an institution, organization, or group. As noted by Geneva Gay, we may not be consciously aware of it, but our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors are determined by culture that in turn influences our teaching and learning practices.¹⁶

Historical Background: Womanist and Feminist Theology

In this section, the discussion will disclose a few of the myriad ways in which womanist and feminist theology have molded religious thought and how females lead in ministry, politics, family, and community. These schools of theological study are based on its evolution of meaning as seen in society, Black literature, the Bible, and female scholars; however, many women develop their personal creed based on their interpretation of the Bible, experiences, or selected reading to affirm their womanhood. Scholar Nyasha Junior says it this way: “African American Christian women developed their own interpretation of the Bible in ways that affirmed their humanity and served to combat their subjugation.”¹⁷

¹⁵ S. M. Schim and A. Z. Doorenbos, “A Three-dimensional Model of Cultural Congruence: Framework for Intervention,” *J Soc Work End Life Palliative Care* 6, no. 3-4 (2010): 256-270. doi:10.1080/15524256.2010.529023, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3074191/>.

¹⁶ James A. Banks, “Cultural Consciousness,” in *Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education*, ed. James A. Banks (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2012), 510, <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452218533.n160>.

¹⁷ Nyasha Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville: KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 39.

The theological issues related to the project are interlocked in the mentor navigating with the mentee to discover her theology. It can be difficult because the mentor must remember she is not making a cookie-cut leader like herself; no, the mentee is not to be a clone of the mentor. In search of meaning as a seminarian, I have discovered that some leaders select a theology of choice between womanist and feminist. For example, Katie Cannon, Jaquelyn Grant, Emilie Townes, and Delores Williams can be classified as womanists. Then you have Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Audre Lorde, Barbara Smith, and bell hooks, who are black feminists. Like Monica Coleman, my first thought is, “I’m not sure I’m womanist.”¹⁸ It is often assumed when Black women are in religious settings, that they are womanist. Is it possible that there is an intersection of the two: womanist and feminist?

In her book, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, Nyasha Junior mentions that the history of womanist approaches began in the 1980s. During this time women began to “self-identify as womanist in preference to feminist, and within the academy, some African American women started to develop black feminist and womanist approaches to their scholarship.”¹⁹

The idea of womanist theology conception was created from the marrying of White feminists’ and Black feminists’ views regarding women, while economically impacting Black female leadership styles. The ideology was observed growing up among most Black young girls who heard a matriarch say, “you being womanish,” which is the beginning of the idea of a female becoming aware of her abilities. This term “womanish”

¹⁸ Coleman and Cannon, “Roundtable Discussion: Must I be Womanist,” 86.

¹⁹ Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, 58.

demarcates a rite of passage when a seasoned Black woman discerned a strength or a stage of maturity exhibited in behavior that signified the child was coming into womanhood. It is a type of affirmation of answering the call into early womanhood.

Although culture influenced the womanist feminism philosophy, it has been credited to Alice Walker's 1984 essay "In Search of Mothers Secret Garden." The meaning of "womanist" depicts Black women as being "traditionally capable," unlike white feminism who "assumes they are capable."²⁰ The popularity increased in 1985 at the premiere of the movie "Color Purple." During the exploration of womanist theology, Coleman said, "In this process, however, womanists have often assumed that black women's religious experiences are Christian."²¹ That is not always true. Early and contemporary influences on the Black feminist and womanist approaches have not considered that all Black women are not Christians; therefore, meanings may vary in our pluralist society. The expression of Black feminist has been depicted in Black arts and the Black power movements in the 1970s. Womanists became visible in various literary novels, poetry, and spoken word genres. An example is seen during the quest of Alice Walker in search of a mentor. When she wrote about the recovery of Zora Neale Hurston, stating, "I read about all things I should have been able to read."²²

As a writer, I agree that mentorship is achieved from the words of pages in books we read. Often the author's character gives the impression that the reader identifies with

²⁰ Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, xv.

²¹ Coleman and Cannon, "Roundtable Discussion: Must I be Womanist," 89.

²² Alice Walker, "Saving the Life That is Your Own: The Importance of Models in the Artist's Life," in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (Sand Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 13.

both the academy and the church. On this leadership journey, if there is no dialogue after reading during self-discovery in theology, it can hinder engagement of thought adoption because of the nuances of defining womanist theology concerning personality type, leadership style, and embedded theology.

One of the main themes of apprehension that is more prevalent now than in the 1980s when female scholars began to entertain the idea of womanist theology is the definition of females sexually loving females. This definition tends to be one of the main deterrents of whether to proclaim and adopt the womanist approach. Alice Walker, in her description, “Clearly states that womanist ‘loves other women sexual and/or nonsexual.’”²³ There are four definitions found in Walker’s work “In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens.”

The definition has come through many birthing fads and trendsetters to the academy’s adoption. I hope that the reader will see through this sketchy timeline the development of womanist. The construction of womanist theology and a look at feminism have been complex. bell hooks said, “womanism connotes a negativity that pits black women against white women.” She further exclaims, “I believe that women should think less in terms of feminism as an identity and more in terms of ‘advocating feminism.’” Last, hooks stated, “feminism is not a personal label that describes oneself but rather an idea toward which one devotes one’s time and energy.”²⁴

The female religious community embraces the womanist idea with a multilayer of meanings that further affects how women in ministry in the church or scholars are often

²³ Coleman and Cannon, “Roundtable Discussion: Must I be Womanist,” xii.

²⁴ Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, xvii.

perceived negatively instead of the purpose's original intent. In many cases, an individual will gravitate toward a meaning that connotes negativity or sinful lifestyles by some religious communities, thus creating barriers to adopting womanism. The importance of exchanging ideas regarding the ambiguity of womanist and feminist as it relates to theology, mentorship, and women in ministry is a caveat to assessing the mentee's identity.

Shaping women in theology is necessary, as Mary Ann Hinsdale discussed in a lecture in 2004 at the Twentieth Madeleva Lecture series at Saint Mary's College. She emphasized the importance of taking action in the question: "Who Are the 'Begats'?"²⁵ Hinsdale spoke on the theme of "Women Shaping Theology" by challenging women to share their stories with other female leaders. I propose that men intentionally train men protégés. Dr. Charles Jackson emphasized in his lecture at the "Innovative Leadership Conference" in Spartanburg, South Carolina that, "It is important in leadership to leave your mantle with someone."²⁶ Typically, women fail to pass the baton forward. This behavior is observed among formal and informal trained female leaders in ministry. Thus, I feel that it is essential to lead as mentors to shape other women.

The importance of the mentor model should include teaching theology as a vital tool for leadership discovery. It is impossible to conduct a theology course briefly; however, womanist and feminist theologies must be discussed during mentorship without the teaching leader imposing their belief on the mentee. Thus, the mentor must maintain

²⁵ Mary Hinsdale, "Who Are the 'Begats'? or Women Theologians Shaping Women Theologians," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 33, no.1 (Spring 2017), 1.

²⁶ Charles Jackson, "Innovative Leadership Conference," Spartanburg, South Carolina, March 26, 2022.

self-awareness while training and in conversational presentation. Otherwise, cloning the mentee can become problematic if a mentor is not cognizant of allowing the mentee to critically think and articulate her point of view. In 1992, there were no models for teaching a fourteen-to-sixteen-week womanist theology course; nonetheless, a six-to-eight week mentoring workshop is now possible. Kelly Brown Douglas acknowledged, “I did not know how to begin to teach students about Black Women’s reality and theological concerns. The pedagogy I initially adopted had great potential for failure.”²⁷

In the researcher’s opinion, it should not be inferred because the woman is Black, she will accept the womanist school of theology; therefore, the mentor requires presenting in a fashion that the mentee can make her own decision. Looking through the lens of a few Black female colleagues, some have become irate after their white professor assumed that because someone is African American, they will lead with a womanist view. Assumption of one’s theology is a common mistake that creates barriers in non-culturally congruent spaces. The mentor should provide information and let the mentee decide. The mentor in this project model will confirm the necessity to teach, demonstrate, and share candidly what theology looks like intersecting womanism with cultural anthropology and practical theological views related to Christianity. This exposure will afford a clear perception of what womanist and feminist theology look like in their context, as each is constantly evolving. Research has revealed to me the pedagogy for a mentor to include a mixture of dialogue, monologue, lecture, and case study to facilitate the mentees’ learning styles for conceptualization.

²⁷ Kelly Brown Douglas, “Teaching Womanist Theology: A Case Study,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 133.

Contemporary Scholarship of Classical and Modern Theologies

Culturally congruent mentoring eliminates many obstacles between mentor-mentee when they are in dialogue. This model of relationship building was piloted in healthcare among families of diversity to decrease mortality and disparities by understanding the patient's culture in end-of-life care. If one is going to prevent the demise of Black women in leadership, it is necessary to move beyond cultural sensitivity to culturally congruent training.

Several researchers (Schim et al), in the paper, "A Three-Dimensional Model of Cultural Congruence: Framework for Intervention," established some foundation for other disciplines. The paper proposed that culturally congruent care is a method to aid the medical professions and paraprofessionals in providing preventative and palliative care for diverse demographics throughout their life span. This seeks to increase longevity and quality of life when an individual's culture is understood. This aids in developing a treatment plan making compliance better. Likewise, mentoring provides a leadership plan for self-identification, sustainability, and capacity building in ministry.

Culture provides the context for all health care and social service throughout the human lifespan. Improving end-of-life and palliative care and enhancing patient and family outcomes requires a nuanced understanding of cultural contexts for those who provide care and those who receive it.²⁸

I propose that this theme, modeled among Black women in mentoring in leadership, will enhance the development and build lasting relational bridges for future networks. Mentors that understand the nuance of Black women are critical in their success in both traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership development. It is

²⁸ Schim and Doorenbos, "A Three-dimensional Model of Cultural Congruence: Framework for Intervention," 256-270.

paramount for mentors to be able to engage with the mentee on a level playing field to foster a connection that allows both transparency and vulnerability without either experiencing offense.

The primary issue most often avoided during the bonding process and throughout the determined time of mentorship is vernacular conflict. More specifically, one might say cultural colloquialism. Much time is wasted explaining expressions and words to reduce offense. The goal of modeling mentoring is to provide leaders formally trained in seminary and informally the opportunity to experience the struggles of Black women in a safe learning environment, aiding in their personal and professional ministry development. Thus, the intersectionality of womanist and feminist theology is a source to empower Black females on the path of self-discovery in leadership regardless of the stage of their development. The life moments are experienced by all women during different seasons of growth but are not identical in outcomes.

It is imperative to reiterate that all Black women experience the exact topic and moments of seasons, but their responses are different, making a considerable difference in identifying one's theology. This proposed idea is established in the work of Kelly Brown Douglas: "Teaching Womanist Theology: A Case Study." Her findings after teaching the class led to a new approach to the definition of the term womanist,

[It] has now become a symbol for Black women's experiences. It points to the unique richness and complexity of Black women's lives as they continually struggle to maintain life and make it better for themselves and their families. In religious scholarship, womanist signals an understanding of God, Christ, the Bible, and the church from the perspective of this struggle.²⁹

²⁹ Douglas, "Teaching Womanist Theology," 134.

It must be understood why the obscurity of the definition of womanist theology is on the horizon of academic and informal theological conversation. Nyasha Junior posits,

In general, womanist scholars in religious-studies-related fields do not offer a reading of biblical texts or engage biblical scholarship in ways that one would anticipate from biblical scholars. This is expected given their respective disciplines. What is problematic is when womanist scholars from these fields and from biblical studies are grouped together.³⁰

The understanding of the definition and purpose of womanism becomes superimposed, and the objective of womanistic servant-leadership is lost in the argument for the self-identification of womanism.

A brief summation of practical theology is necessary for this project. The leader mentoring should not get consumed in womanist and feminist conversations as the mentee will determine her theology in time. Incorporation of the understanding of practical theology, (womanist practical theology), further develops the mentee. When leaders who mentor novice and veterans in ministerial leadership include practical theology, it can be done as a theological discipline that explores preaching, teaching, counseling, and mentoring.

A womanist leader must consider practical theology in presentation for their audience using any pedagogical model when preaching, teaching, counseling, and mentoring. There are four learning styles that practical theologians include in teaching methods:

Innovative learners seek meaning, learn as they listen, and share ideas. Analytic learners want the facts to critical think. Common-sense learners are hands-on and limit discussion. Finally, dynamic learners are excited by hidden possibilities. Their favorite question is, ‘What can this become?’³¹

³⁰ Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, 59.

³¹ Penny Zettler, “Teaching Methods,” in *Leadership Handbooks of Practical Theology*, Vol. 2, ed. James D. Berkley (Ada, MI: Christianity Today, Inc. and Baker Book House Company, 1992), 386-387.

Adequately trained leaders who mentor with practical theology in mind propel mentees into sustainability in the call to ministry.

Mentorship and Theological Themes

The narrative of my selected passage is Luke 1:26-45, where Mary, the mother of Jesus, reveals her seeking mentorship from a culturally congruent woman — her cousin Elizabeth. One can surmise, Mary apparently wanted to be taught how to accept the call to nurture the developing child in preparation to give birth and assist in the growth and development of a healthy child. Here we have two women with unique conceptions: one is elderly and barren and the other is a young virgin espoused to be married. These women both had experiences requiring confirmation from the Holy Spirit and a human source to confirm and bear the ministries given to them. Similarly, a woman who is called experiences doubts although she knows she hears the voice of God. She gains comfort from a mentor who recognizes the call and increases confidence that goals can be accomplished with skills and faith to implement leadership effectively while caring for herself and God's people with a mentor alongside her. It is paramount that the mentor is aware of the importance of self-reflection to ensure the mentee engages in self-care for continued transformation that demonstrates building capacity and sustainability as a leader.

This doctoral thesis and proposed project submit a thematic mapping for successful leadership training via applied wholistic mentorship approaches among women of Color. A cultural look at the Black woman's Jesus and bonding during sisterly mentorship serve as a key to equipping leaders for the perpetuity of women in ministry.

Jacquelyn Grant reveals the challenges of feminist Christology and argues that the white women's experiences fail to speak to women of Color. It appears that she proposes a womanist theology and Christology that demonstrate inadequate cultural wisdom and knowledge for contemporary Black women in ministerial leadership roles. Why is this position suggested? "In [her] classic work in womanist theology, Grant does not use the Bible as an authoritative source. Instead, she focuses on African American women's experience as a key source for theological reflection."³²

Why do Black women mentor-mentee relationships matter? The researcher asserts that being entirely trained by non-black women skews perspective, experience, and wisdom in praxis and life. This later statement will be supported succinctly as a background to the overarching hypothesis of the project. I submit that women of Color possess an innate strength that enlivens one another to nurture perseverance with knowledge and experience from a viewpoint insufficient among non-black male or female mentors.

The mentor-mentee relationship is a space where another can discern the emergence of a seed (leadership) with a kindred spirit. Similarly, it suggests that the mentor observes and confirms the potential of the ministry leadership seed within the mentee as Elizabeth did – as baby John leaped – when Mary with a child came to visit. We see the intergenerational dialogue in Alice Walker's example of the definition between the mom and child, displaying *womanish* growth in the following mentoring moment:

³² Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, 65.

‘Mama, I’m walking to Canada, and I’m taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.’ Reply: ‘It wouldn’t be the first time.’³³

The mentor must have journeyed the road that the mentee is to travel. The project proposes mentors who build relationships and incorporate strategic pedagogy for women in training leaders to foster a system that typifies “teaching wisdom and study,” a phrase translated from a hieroglyphics symbol in the title of Dr. Asa G. Hilliard's book, *SBA: The Reawakening of the African Mind*. Womanism and womanish behavior is a language that is understood culturally among Black families. Hilliard wrote,

Symbols, analogies, and rituals were used profusely and were indispensable to the process. Such strategies embody the best of what is now known in advanced forms of pedagogy used anywhere in the world. For example, in analogies, we go from the known to the unknown. In symbols, we consolidate and synthesize knowledge and produce abstract vehicles to access that knowledge. Rituals develop a base of shared knowledge as well as social bonds.³⁴

Hilliard's work focuses on the pedagogical construct of cultural educators as the most impactful for learners. His insight on the benefits of cultural learning supports this doctoral project's position of mentor and pedagogy being foundational in the transformation of women in leadership. The value of culture can also be understood through the lens of theology. Paramount to this discussion is Alice Walker's definition,

1. From womanish. (Opp. of ‘girlish,’ i.e., frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of Color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, ‘you acting womanish,’ i.e., like a woman, usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous, or willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered ‘good’ for one. Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up, Interchangeable with another black folk expression: ‘You trying to be grown.’ Responsible. In charge. *Serious*. 2. Also: A woman who loves other women, sexually and or nonsexually.

³³ Alice Walker, *In Search of our Mothers' Gardens* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), xi; Kelly Brown Douglas, “Teaching Womanist Theology: A Case Study,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no 2 (Fall 1992): 134.

³⁴ Asa G. Hilliard, III, *SBA: The Reawakening of the African Mind* (Gainesville, FL: Makare Publishing Company, 1997), 10.

Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as a natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally universalist, as in 'Mama, why are we brown, pink, and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige, and black?' Ans.: 'Well, you know the colored race is just like a flower garden, with every color flower represented.' Traditionally capable, as in: 'Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.' Reply: 'It wouldn't be the first time.'³ Loves music. Loves dance. Loves the moon. *Loves* the Spirit. Loves love and food and roundness. Loves struggle. Loves the folk. Loves herself. *Regardless*. 4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.³⁵

There is a difference in how womanist and feminist are defined and look in praxis. Black and white female leaders might display a type of dual leadership style as the two tend to overlap. Some leaders appear schizoid when a Black female embraces feminist theology and denies womanist as a Black woman and vice versa in relationship to a white woman embracing womanist theology. There is space to select one of the four definitions or combine them by looking at the complete description; however, culturally congruent mentoring is seen in Alice Walker's definition, biblical interpretation, and theological discernment. The impact of culture, society, and generational differences have added more variation to the description of womanism. Mentoring theology brings multilayered ideologies and life experiences to the table of dialogue, which aids in how one perceives and embraces womanism and teaches it as a Black female leader.

Reflection and Conclusion

The relevance of developing a foundation for mentoring leaders to be sustainable in traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership includes a mentoring model for

³⁵ Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Garden*, xi-xii; Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation*, xiii.

Black women in ministry with supportive pedagogical practices and theological approaches to self-efficacy. The researcher submits that the foundation and infrastructure for successful leadership begins with a solid idea of personal theology, self-care, identifying personality type, and leadership style. Those pillars shape one's theology regarding how Black women will practice in their context.

In search of self-discovery of theological identity to mentor others, the researcher agrees with Nyasha Junior that womanism has so many definitions associated with it.³⁶ Even when someone adopts or self-identify, it is necessary to know how the individual defines their theology. One cannot assume based on definitions, race, or gender alone – as we often do – that we know their theology. Thus, the researcher, as a Black female, does not see herself solely as a womanist theologian. She suggests a theology of an amalgam of womanist, feminist, and practical theologies, termed Tri-axis theology, is an option for self-identifying. There is a paradigm shift on the horizon in what womanist, feminist, and practical theology looks like as it encompasses mentoring.

It has been too long since the historical idea of womanism and feminism identity has become one of race, gender, sexuality, and a sense of supremacy as opposed to directions for advocacy and perpetuity of sisterhood in religious and secular settings. Tri-axism, experienced at the table of mentoring in a culturally congruent environment as if at mama's kitchen table or sitting on the front porch doing one another's hair in intergenerational conversations, will rebuild hope, respect, and understanding — as in leader to leader. This model of leadership will begin the processes of forgiveness,

³⁶ Nyasha Junior, along with other womanist scholars, makes the argument that the terms womanism and womanist have different definitions; however, there are some similarities among scholars.

healing, and restoration among women from oppressive pain and suffering. It further aids in self-identity, self-care, and self-validation to lead effectively.

Adopting theological schools of thought is significant for communicating a leader's faith, and it contributes to how they lead. The project at this phase analyzed three theological theories: womanist theology, feminist theology, and practical theology, with emphasis on womanist and feminist theologies. This is done to show intersectionality when a Black woman answers the call to lead as a minister in a traditional and nontraditional setting. Many of these women are affected by subliminal oppression further cultivating women to live through W.E.B. Dubois' concept of double consciousness. Dubois, on many occasions, references double consciousness as,

[L]ooking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. ('It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness . . .') One ever feels his twoness — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.³⁷

This multiple consciousness is what many Black women in leadership experience; however, the researcher contends more specifically she, "faces triple consciousness" — race, gender, and her theology. Her self-awareness and an adopted theology will reveal her ability to survive in her vocation.

The support of a mentor who understands the mentee's plight can offer support for spirit, mind, and body during the transformative discovery of self and training while in pursuit of vocation in ministerial leadership. Black female leaders need to understand the biblical interpretation of womanist and feminist theology. It is equally important to

³⁷ LitCharts, "The Soul of Black Folks by W.E.B. DuBois – 'Double Consciousness: Symbol Analysis,'" <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-souls-of-black-folk/symbols/double-consciousness>.

grasp their roots to determine what school she will embrace. The mentee might adopt ideologies of both theologies in a paradigm of “dual consciousness.” Like myself, she might pause between womanism and feminism as she enters praxis, later developing her own theology. Examining how theological themes frame the project, paired with the notion of triple consciousness, are areas that the researcher will explore in developing a mentoring model for innovative Black female leaders in ministry.

As the principal investigator, I chose to create a theology using strains of thought from the said theologies naming it “Tri-axis” Theology. This term was birthed during this doctoral study. The working name, Tri-axis Theology, is a trilateral expression of theological foundations that offers integration of thought concerning womanist, feminist, and practical theology. This latitude offers a leader an opportunity to step beyond the boundaries of the norms of womanism, feminism, and practical theologies regardless of race, sexual orientation, and social justice stance.

Finally, to achieve foundational caveats on the intrinsic importance of why thinking theologically as a Black woman in traditional and non-traditional contextual spaces of leadership is necessary, it offers staying power during adversity to know “why and how” one leads. The theological schools of thought were selected to cultivate the reader’s understanding of their use in culturally alike mentoring women of Color in ministry. Previously in this chapter of study, the focus on womanism, citing parallels and contralateral differences with feminism – including brief elaborations on the ideology of practical theologies – helped the researcher create her theology.

It is vital to understand in a community of Black woman (quasi-incubator/cohort) that adopting a theology is supportive to pedagogical practices. Understanding also

promotes self-discovery for sustainability in a traditional and non-traditional vocational context. This leads to helping one explore in the next chapter some interdisciplinary thoughts of social psychology and self-determination to further clarify their “why and how” they lead.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is a literary investigation of social psychology, a discipline of study outside the field of theology. This field of study was selected to demonstrate the intersection of the project's thematic mapping for successful leadership. Self-determination theory, a strong characteristic among Black women that is honed in culturally congruent mentoring, will be reviewed. This project focuses on training via an applied wholistic leadership approach through the lens of culturally congruent mentorship among women of Color, in particular, Black women in ministry.

The impact of social psychology and the self-determination theory implementation adds to providing a well-rounded mentoring model. Both provide concrete evidence to the importance of unpacking emotional intelligence regarding self-awareness as it relates to self-identity, self-care, and self-validation. Thus, formulating a thread to prove the model of culturally congruent mentoring – as tied in the biblical, theological, and historical foundation chapters – is linked in this chapter.

Finally, this chapter will achieve foundational caveats on the intrinsic importance of why thinking interdisciplinary as a Black woman in traditional and non-traditional contextual spaces of leadership is necessary. The disciplines of social psychology and self-determination theory schools of thought were selected to cultivate the reader's

understanding of leading with an attitude of wholeness. This helps insure inclusion in culturally alike mentoring of Black women in ministry as a tool for effectiveness. It is vital to understand that in a community of Black women (quasi-incubator/cohort) that adopting a theology that is supportive to pedagogical practices is important.

Understanding also promotes self-discovery for sustainability in a traditional and non-traditional vocational context. It helps one explore interdisciplinary thoughts of social psychology and self-determination to clarify their “why and how” they lead.

An Investigation of Social Psychology

After deliberating over various fields of study, the discipline of social psychology was researched. Other fields of study were relinquished because the combination of social psychology contains the pillars in the framework of systematic learning with cultural and traditional sensitivity. The field of social psychology was chosen because it comprises supportive topics for the doctoral project. For example, group behavior, self-concept, social perception, leadership, nonverbal behavior, conformity, aggression, and prejudice are all included.

The process of obtaining the best supportive interdisciplinary study for this research project began with understanding the significance of identifying the core value of the mentee’s learning style. This is essential for designing supportive cultural pedagogical strategies for transformative relationship between mentor and mentee among Black women. Thus, the discipline of social psychology has been selected because it integrates two disciplines – sociology and psychology – which bridges the foundation for cultural congruence. This is a relational modality of one way how Black women learn

both in a formal and informal settings. The interdisciplinary theory in the field of social psychology is self-determination. This chosen theory will be discussed further in this chapter as it is the field that includes perception of interaction between individuals and groups in leadership and mentorship.

The scope of social psychology as a study examines social contexts and how emotions and behaviors influence social engagements and interactions. This links mentoring relationships, learning modalities, and self-awareness for individuals as well as in groups. In conjoining the field of studies, the aid of the selected discipline in establishing pedagogical strategies to craft an environment of learning between mentor and mentee is pivotal. The project problem in leading and mentoring contains multiple variables that result from the lack of adequate equipping of women in ministry from a wholistic approach. The employing of pre- and post-questionnaires and assessment tools, as identified in the research design, includes self-evaluation of well-being, personality type, and how they affect leadership styles as studied in psychology. Secondly, monologue and dialogue exercises include the participants' self-assessment of the family of origin and culture discovery of their current social location. This shows in social science and learning how people interface with one another.

Social psychology convergence of perspectives validates the necessity of culture congruence as the key factor for leadership mentor selection. The bi-directional field of social psychology, with its definition and function, has been argued since its inception in 1770. Kendra Cherry, in her overview of social psychology, reported that psychologist Gordon Allport defines social psychology as methods "to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined,

or implied [in] the presence of other human beings.”¹ The arrival of this discipline in the early twentieth century in America differed from the behavioral and psychoanalytic schools of thought.

Social psychology is the scientific study of how we feel about, think about, and behave toward the people around us and how our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are influenced by those people. As this definition suggests, the subject matter of social psychology is very broad and can be found in just about everything that we do every day.²

The dawning of social psychology focused on the interest of perception and cognition. This field observed the phenomena of attitude influence on individuals and groups. In 1898, in the first experimental publication by Norman Triplett on the topic of social facilitation, the ethics of laboratory experimentation in the 70’s was in question in terms of determining if attitudes really conduct behavior and how much science is done in a cultural context.³

The rationale associated with choosing social psychology is that separately sociology and psychology have their own expression of ontology which allows for substantiating the importance of self-care. This interdisciplinary approach aids in affirming the critical nature of Black women in ministry for developing strong emotional intelligence for self-care as they lead. It also offers validation and fortitude for sustainability for physical and mental health. In essence, Kenneth Gergen’s *On the Very*

¹ Cherry Kendra, “An Overview of Social Psychology,” July 5, 2020, <https://www.verywellmind.com/social-psychology-4157177#history-of-social-psychology>.

² Charles Stagnor, Rajiv Jhangiani, and Hammond Tarry, *Principles of Social Psychology*, 1st International Edition, 2014, 17, Creative, <https://kkora.kpu.ca/islandora/object/kora%3A552/datastream/PDF/view>.

³ Kenneth Gergen, “On the Very Idea of Social Psychology,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (December 2008): 10.

Idea of Social Psychology describes the field as the joining of two disparate communities identified as “mind talk” on the one hand and “social talk” on the other.”⁴ How Black women learn is not always in a classroom but in our world where self-concepts are developed by others’ responses and evaluation of behavior shaping thoughts and actions.

The project postulates that self-concept is foundational for Black women who lead in ministry. If the cultural element is not understood by the mentor, this can further damage or add to the stagnation of the mentee preventing her from leading self-efficaciously. The disciplines reviewed will add to fortifying this ideology; thus, further research was done to ensure the solution of the hypothesis.

Interdisciplinary Theory: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

The interdisciplinary theory of self-determination increases provocative conversation for future projects among culturally congruent Black women in ministry. This theory interacts with the project theme, the biblical foundations passage, historical foundations, and theological foundations to hone the nuances of pedagogical strategies for culturally congruent mentorship for Black women bridging both traditional and non-traditional ministerial leadership. The project theme submits that mentorship among Black women is most successful with Black women in a culturally congruent relationship. This is not to say they do not learn from women of other races. There are key elements experienced with culturally congruent mentors; this supports the pedagogical strategies of designing a model for mentoring innovative Black women in effective leadership.

⁴ Gergen, “On the Very Idea of Social Psychology,” 333.

The use of social psychology is linked to the solution of the problem in this project. Studying and observing groups of women and their behavior as mentors and mentees allows one to see the social and psychological interactions in discussion among Black women navigating according to how others perceive them as Black leaders. This leads to the impact of triple consciousness as they discover self-efficacy through identifying self-care, personality type, and new leadership skills. Triple consciousness in Black women is always present in terms of their race, gender, and theology (in the context of what others perceive of them).

This exploration of social psychology is a specialty that addresses components of humanity's innate talents to hone the subject's skill set and enhance practicing lifestyle modifications in ministerial leadership. The theory will further contribute to solidifying the hypothesis and solution of the doctoral project. The objective of equipping leaders with this knowledge to train other leaders as unique individuals with a fluidity allows the mentee to grow and garner new skills sets for self-discovery and sustainability. The extent to which a mentor understands and models the theories embedded in the selected interdisciplinary studies determines the effectiveness of her leadership and equipping other women. The interdisciplinary area of social psychology and self-determination theory selected is necessary for discovering self-awareness, skill-building, retraining thinking, and identification of gifts and personality types.

The project aims to achieve and improve self-concept with the interpretation of the pre- and post-assessments of self-care. These assessments aid in determining the spiritual, emotional, and physical personal care baselines. The Linked Mini Personality tool assesses God given reasons for why we function as we do. It also identifies both the positive and cautionary distinctions about their personality types.

Mentoring

As it has already been established, mentoring plays a significant role in ensuring efficacy among Black women in the ministry. The church has recently begun to entertain the notion of staff training by mentors and coaches. It must be understood there is a difference between the two types of trainers.

Askew and Carnell (2011) have recently clarified one way of articulating the relationship between mentoring and coaching: mentoring is about supporting significant career changes focused on the whole person. . .; coaching focuses on drilling deep into professional knowledge and expertise to refine, hone and tone existing skills. . . coaching is about increasing and sustaining effectiveness through focused learning. The coach's aim is to work with client to achieve all of the client's potential.⁵

The most succinct definition of a mentor is “an experienced and trusted advisor.”⁶

Mentorship requires time to develop relationships to promote trust for exchange between mentor and mentee; this learning process is unlike formal learning. Thus, the use of principles employed in the selected interdisciplinary models will assist with learning the cultural and social impact of the mentees.

Asa G. Hilliard implies that “teaching wisdom and study” reawakens the brain as a perspective of education and will be further evaluated for its worth in the project.⁷ This research agrees with Hillard's statement in terms of the effect of culturally congruent mentoring. It liberates and stimulates the mentee to experience and express freedom of thought — enhancing creativity. In search of proof for the doctoral project, mentorship practices develop innovative women in leadership by utilizing cultural sensitivity,

⁵ Brian E. Wakeman, “A Christian Perspective on Mentoring,” *Transformation* 29, no. 4 ((2012): 278.

⁶ Wakeman, “A Christian Perspective on Mentoring,” 278.

⁷ Asa G. Hilliard, *SBA: The Reawakening of the African Mind* (Gainesville, GA: Makare Publishing Company, 1997), 10.

theological perspectives, and interdisciplinary strategies that are supportive of the design of a pedagogical platform for wholistic self-discovery and implementation of training.

This preliminary search ascertains the importance of further research on the fundamentals of the intersectionality of theology and social psychology to support mentorship and pedagogy. This proposes a model that assesses the effects on how women learn to determine the direction and cohesiveness of the interdisciplinary studies for mentoring. This discipline relates to and informs the problem and solution of the project.

The problem is the lack of trained culturally congruent Black women minister mentors who can develop in a safe space and identify as quasi-incubator while forming relationships as a cohort. This mentorship model will demonstrate the solution for effective mentoring among culturally congruent mentor-mentees relationships. Pedagogy will be facilitated by social psychology and self-determination theory. This will be actualized with assessment tools, dialogue, skill building, and reflection in groups and individually in an environment of social acceptance. The idea of social acceptance includes the idea of displaying the definition of social psychology.

Integration of Biblical Foundation and Mentorship for Leaders in Ministry

This doctoral project is the implementation of an innovative cultural model for female leadership with pedagogical learning activities. These activities will create change in self-discovery, clarity of ministry vision, and strategies for sustainability that was revealed in the leadership mentor-mentee relationship between Elizabeth and Mary in Luke 1:26-45. Through the lens of the theory of self-determination, mentorship will be

unveiled by and through culturally congruent leaders. The biblical foundation premise will work to show how “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”⁸ The narrative demonstrates pillars of ministerial mentoring are revelation, confirmation, development, and implementation of ministry assignments in the lives of two women in an oppressive male-dominated society. The project’s hypothesis suggests that if Black women are paired with leaders who mentor, it will facilitate a circle of trust that encourages mentees to engage in self-discovery retraining that transforms stagnant women into confident, effective ministry leaders.

The passage selected from the book of Luke rather than Matthew shows Luke’s account focused on Mary’s call as opposed to the narrative being centered around Joseph. Secondly, the relationship between Elizabeth and Mary leverages the proof of the project hypothesis of creating a culturally innovative model for female leaders’ mentorship. This can be observed in the encounter between Elizabeth and Mary. As a result, Luke’s focus is on Elizabeth and Mary as women in leadership and shows how being mentored by a woman of the same cultural origin helps with producing transformed confident protégés. They gained self-awareness and clarity of ministry vision to lead effectively. The interdisciplinary topic of social psychology is discerned as Mary decided to visit Elizabeth. She gained social and emotional support to enhance self-determination for the journey.

Although Mary had accepted her assignment, perhaps she felt the need emotionally and socially to seek human guidance from someone who would understand

⁸ *The Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, Pr 27:17 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1971).

and teach her. Elizabeth, now with child in her old age, apparently suffered from being motherless in a society that saw women primarily as baby makers.

The connection was immediate and increased self-determination as both women were together for about ninety days in a circle of trust during the transformation. I agree with Sara Parks et al in their work, *Jewish and Christian Women in The Ancient Mediterranean*, how Luke “takes care to depict their roles (women in pairs) that would have appealed to a conservative Roman audience — namely, in subservient, complacent positions relative to male characters.”⁹ Elizabeth and Mary’s relationship helped them to gain self-identity, self-care, and self-validation to forge the journey in the call to fulfilling their call. In this circle of social care and the psychological presence of one another, both are nontraditional leaders.

Lisa Hess confirms the need for interdisciplinary applications in her work, *A Companionable Way: Path of Devotion in Conscious Love*, where she asserted the importance of social psychology and self-determination being a tool in communities such as a circle of trust or cohort of mentorship. “As spiritual friendships grew numerous and serial, however, the path inevitably led into relationships with those inclined to gather, listen, and make decisions in a seeker-oriented, nonhierarchical, nonlinear fashion.”¹⁰ Such is the case with Elizabeth and Mary and women today during rediscovery of self. The use of interdisciplinary studies in mentorship among Black women openly licenses their self-worth outside their genitalia as in the ancient days. In these spaces, Black

⁹ Sara Parks, Shayna Sheinfeld, and Meredith J. C. Warren, *Jewish and Christian Women in the Ancient Mediterranean* (London, UK: and New York, NY: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2022), 166.

¹⁰ Lisa M. Hess, *A Companionable Way: Path of Devotion in Conscious Love* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Book, 2016), 115.

women who mentor become as our strong mothers, whom you can talk to about anything, where . . . “mind talk” and “social talk” become useful.

Social Psychology “Mind Talk” and “Social Talk” Among Harriet Tubman and Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate

Historically, Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate and Harriet Tubman confirm the dynamic influence of the same culture mentoring using social psychology and self-determination theory to chart a path of leadership as mentors. When researching the self-determination theory, women can see through their lens. They are portrayed as leaders and pioneers in leadership who mentored women in traditional and non-traditional vocations of ministry and social entrepreneurship. These two women were looked at in detail. Their lives displayed leadership styles that naturally included mentoring others to lead without fear of sharing the platform or losing their status in the public.

Tubman and Tate’s life reveals the importance of the 4 C’s of leadership as disclosed earlier in this work. Courage, conviction, creativity, and collaboration – the 4C’s – are pillars of leadership with love. They stabilized the theory of self-determination and enabled one to lead others in a liberated manner. Both figures used the 4C’s to achieve personal goals and lead others to accomplish success. Their stories show positive “mind talk” to prepare them for “social talk” for the fortitude of self with policymakers, ministers, women, men, and the community.

The role of women in the church has been one of controversy for centuries. This doctoral project is not debating if Black women should lead as a preacher or pastor, although some of their pain, stagnation, and misplacement in the church is causally related to:

- The barriers of women being undervalued in ministerial leadership
- The barriers between women in leadership formally trained or mentored by males.
- Upward progression of novices and those who are not trained formally

The project will show how the three barriers inhibit relationships of mentor-mentee from forming, especially among culturally noncongruent women. The historical figures selected are catalysts for the empowerment of women to seek mentoring without fear of exploitation by another woman. This project was designed to provide a model for effective mentor relationships from a woman-to-woman perspective to examine the complexity of shared women's experience in ministerial leadership.

Jacquelyn Grant discusses in *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* an interrelationship of the dimensions of women's experience while drawing on a combination of the historical and political aspects of women's experience.¹¹ "It is sufficient to say at this point that the struggle of women in the church is not only one of the political process of ordination or leadership, but it also involves, as we shall see, theological issues, such as, are women human and can they women represent Christ?"¹² The historical figures' lives reveal the complexity of women's experiences and the need today for mentoring although they paved the way for a journey that could have been less painful. The pain aided in the paradigm shift of Black women in leadership. Tate's early days of leadership is most significant for one demonstrating cultural congruence as she trained daughters-in-law and other women and

¹¹ Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response*, ed. Susan Thistlethwaite (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 9.

¹² Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus*, 9.

men to lead her dynasty. One interesting decision she made was to select many women to carry on the mission in primary roles of the organization instead of her sons and other men. She indicated she thought they would be most loyal in pursuit of her vision. Tate's style of mentorship in all facets would not be accepted today; however, there are social psychological and self-determination caveats that can be garnered. Interdisciplinary implementation added to providing a well-rounded model. Thus, transformative mentoring models can elucidate self-identity in leadership when one includes theology and interdisciplinarity schools of thought to unpack the complexity of women training women.

The idea of researching non-church disciplines aided this project towards a more wholistic foundation. Often when Black women are in ministry, they tend to focus only on the spiritual formation which can become off balance in terms of recognizing that she is three entities in one. This can be a form of enslavement as many times women who attend Beyond Boundary Consulting activities disagree with the need for balanced living. This becomes an opportunity for retraining through mentoring. Linda E. Thomas indicated in *The Holy Spirit and Black Women: A Womanist Perspective* that "the enslavement and suffering that their bodies endured during the middle passage in slavery in America did not destroy their conscious connection to a spiritual force that was part of their worldview in Africa and subsequently in American slavery."¹³ I submit that the comingling of their spiritual heritage from Africa with the American view of spirituality has affected the conscious value of Black women's self-care of the entire person

¹³ Linda E. Thomas, *The Holy Spirit and Black Women: A Womanist Perspective: Christian Doctrine for Global Gender Justices*, ed. Grace Ji-Sun Kim et al. (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015), 74.

throughout history. Poor well-being can distort self-concept, clarity of vision, and hope due to negative “mind talk,” allostatic stress, and self-validation in arenas of “social talk.” All of the aforementioned items lead to stagnation and the inability to build capacity and create sustainability.

Maya Angelou said, “Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it.”¹⁴ This is why the discovery of leadership style, personality type, gifts, and assessment of self-care baseline are vital for all leaders, especially those on the path of ministerial leadership. Having those tools available in her tool kit are essential when considering the vocation of ministry. In many cases these assessments are completed; however, in my years of servant leadership as a mentor, often the mentee answers the evaluations according to how they want to be as opposed to where they currently are, which skews the results. It gives a false presentation of her social location in terms of the health of her well-being (spirit, mind, body, and in some cases financial state).

As a model, the historical Tate and Tubman’s leadership style, personality type, spiritual gift, and self-care baseline are pilot studies for this research. Identifying their self-awareness in said areas is to assist the reader with the logic of interdisciplinary social psychology and self-determination theology selections as being resourceful for the project. Leaders are better able to lead others when they understand “why” they lead as they do — therefore, the assessments. Understanding the positive and negative aspects of your leadership style, personality type, gifts, and self-care baseline provide parameters for one to manage the cautionary (negative traits) characteristics associated with the components of personhood.

¹⁴ Maya Angelou, Goodreads.com, <https://www.google.com/search?q>

Aubrey Malphurs teaches in his book, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership*, that there are four leadership styles: director, inspirational, diplomate, and analytical. Leaders possess a dominant style as listed, but there are components of each of the styles in varying measures displayed in leading others.¹⁵ These styles are adequate for this project for women — both formally and informally trained females. The results will show the valuable source of self-concept and being paired with a mentor during self-discovery as a seasoned or novice minister in leadership.

Appropriate mentorship teaches self-care and leadership style based on personality style, education, skills, and spiritual gifts, which will impact the mentee's self-determination. Paul Harris asserts, "Personality has the power to uplift, power to depress, power to curse, and power to bless."¹⁶ Leaders who recognize others' leadership styles and personality strengths and weaknesses afford the group the opportunity to work together more efficiently with respect and honor for one another. This combined with adopting a theology establishes momentum and consistency in their "why" for leading.

There is value in owning one's theology as a leader; it undergirds one self-determination increasing faith to pursue the assignment with resilience. This idea also supports how one leads as a mentor that is passing it on to mentees to uniquely do the same. Using the social psychology disciplines allows understanding to assist mentors to guide discussions about embedded theology in a positive way. Introducing systematic theologies must be done with sensitivity of others' embedded theology. When

¹⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing, 2002), 94.

¹⁶ Linda Gilden, *LINKED: Maximizing Life Connections One Link at a Time* (Friendswood, TX: Bold Vision Books, 2018), 18.

insensitivity is visible, it is offensive which builds a wall during learning. The discussion should not be to dismantle their theology, but to enhance and create space for critical thinking, dialogue, and decision-making. The leader's caution must be taken not to further blind their insight to look through the lens of your thought processes and imagine God as others do in a pluralistic world. It is necessary for the mentor to know her theological stance without forcing it on the mentee but introduce her to a variety of theologies and allow her to identify her theology through experience and dialogue. Thus, space for "social talk" in a safe space to take the mentee on an oral journey that resembles a spiritual autobiography to learn their embedded theology or another school of thought to build relationship nonjudgmentally is needful.

Critically reflecting on my spiritual autobiography in conjunction with identifying my current social location is foundational for self-reflection and the development of thinking theologically while facilitating mentoring. Having a seasoned mentor to walk through the trajectory of self-discovery for contextual leadership leads to adopting a theological position and the value of self-awareness. The mentor can leverage her culture, personal experience, and training as she walks alongside the mentee acquiring her personal revelation of who God is in relation to her spirit, mind, and body. Her discovery of what are salient aids in constructing her theology forms the root of her being present in her contextual vocation to produce lasting fruit.

Why is it important to know one's theology? I submit the idea that when in pursuit of Kingdom building, it requires assurance of the discerned availability of the divine enterprise. Further, it shows how to appropriate those resources as one utilizes her skills, gifts, and personal measure of faith to fulfill the God-given assignment(s) as a ministerial leader in partnership with God. This is the key to self-determination.

These schools of thought are necessary to solidify the foundation of why I argue that culturally congruent leadership equipping is compulsory among women of Color in traditional and non-traditional ministries. In particular, the art of Black women navigating others in a quasi-incubator with supportive pedagogical practices for self-discovery begins with personal self-care. Positive characteristics of culturally congruent mentoring among Black women is reflected when:

- the bond and relationships are bridged more easier
- limited conflicts and apprehensions
- the mentee mirrors self-awareness
- the mentor and mentee identify more likenesses than differences
- monologue and dialogue disclose transformative exchange between the mentor and mentee
- the mentee gains the confidence to pursue fulfilling her call

Considering the hypothesis that if Black women in ministry lead as mentors as a type of midwife, then it will facilitate transformative support birthing visions. Both novice and stagnant women ministers will become content, confident, and demonstrate measurable successful ministry leaders.

Scientific Model

The infrastructure of the project foundation is constructed with narrative of the Bible, use of figures of our history, and theological perspectives that intersect the theory of self-determination. This is a platform for quality development of a model for leadership mentoring among Black women in ministry. Further building on this project,

social psychology can be analyzed by integrating the Holistic Board Model Rubric. Thus, the rubric “evaluates the group’s participation and learning based on their leadership needs, skills, knowledge as a traditional, non-traditional, and social entrepreneur.”¹⁷ The determination includes accessing the mentor and mentee’s attitudinal change and lifestyle modification. The scientific model implemented ethnographic qualitative research. The use of derived concepts supports ideas of interest that do not exist but are implied. For example, it allows the candidate to suggest a tri-axis theology, triple consciousness, and culturally congruent mentoring.

Black Girl Magic and Theory of Self-Determination

New insights gleaned during this interdisciplinary selection of theory further confirms the use of pedagogy instead of teaching women in ministry.

Pedagogy refers more broadly to the theory and practice of education and how this influences the growth of learners . . . while pedagogy, most commonly understood as the approach to teaching, refers more broadly to the theory and practice of education, and how this influences the growth of learners.¹⁸

The process of being mentored is in fact a methodology where growth of the mentee is impacted by the approach of teaching — thus, cultural congruence affords a rich exposure of experiences in life that are easily discussed, interpreted, applied, and replicated.

¹⁷ The Holistic Board Model Rubric, <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/resources/creating-and-usingrubrics/=chrome.1.69i57j25i39>.

¹⁸ Google.com, s.v. “pedagogy,” <https://www.google.com/search?q+pedagogy&oq=p&aq=chrome.1.60i57j35i39>.

The Need for Culturally Congruent Mentorship

Leadership mentoring provides supportive pedagogy for Black women in ministry. This occurs when culturally congruent female mentors in ministry establishes sustainability, capacity-building skills, and self-efficacy in a safe space. It is anticipated the results of the data will demonstrate the solution to the problem by integrating multiple assessment tools, workshops with life experiences cases, reading assignments for enliven discussions, and role play. The participants will complete a six-to-eight-week pilot project with clarity of their vocation and self-discovery in relation to self-care, personality type, and leadership style by identifying personal theology. How the information is disseminated and actualized by the mentee is critical in terms of cultural congruence versus cultural sensitivity. The use of social psychology makes sense because the theory of self-determination is clearly understood in a culturally congruent environment of mentoring as opposed to being perceived as an angry Black woman. In the following paragraphs, you will read about a mix leadership mentoring experience that will further clarify the need for culturally congruent mentorship.

While matriculating as a student at Central Baptist Theological Seminary (CBTS), it was observed how women in a full scholarship program, the “Woman’s Leadership Initiative,” were matched with a mentor working on acquiring a four-year Master of Divinity degree. The program accepted women from various religious traditions such as Pentecostal, AME, UMC, and Baptist who were Black, White, and Hispanic. The program was designed initially for full-time women students ages twenty-four to thirty-five. The mentors were primarily from the Baptist tradition, feminist theologians, and two Black women who embraced womanist theology. The program had difficulty with the designated ages of the full-time students and accepted approximately

twelve full-time working women who were in some form of ministry. The youngest Black student was twenty-one. There were five Black women and seven White women. One of the White women had a life experience of homelessness and other difficulties, and she often identified with the Black women in the cohort. (Respecting her privacy, she will be called Joy).

During the first semester, the mentees were asked to write about prior mentorship experiences. They were to list their likes, dislikes, and what they would like in a mentor during this academic excursion. Each student also completed a Myers-Briggs personality test. The coordinator reviewed and matched the mentor and mentee. The mentor and mentee pairing consisted of two white students (that included Joy) and a Hispanic student who were matched with three older white women. There were relational and communication barriers which ended the mentor and mentee contracts. The Hispanic student withdrew after the first semester. The other two white students went through three mentors within the four years of matriculation. The two Black women who were paired with a Black mentor remained in covenant for the entire four years and remain friends today. Joy, the white student like the three Black women paired with a white mentor, changed mentors numerous times until she withdrew and went to another program and graduated. The pairing appeared to have a cultural deficiency, although racially, they were white. For example, Joy's cultural background resembled a life more so like a marginalized individual who better identified with Black women. The Hispanic student was not culturally paired in that there were only white and Black mentors available.

Ultimately, Joy's mentors were unable to communicate effectively to bond as they were unable to get passed her perspective on life influenced by her being reared

homeless. However, Joy appreciated her experiences to empower her to reach fulfilling her call into ministry and counseling to effectively service all people. Joy is doing well in ministry and her profession and as a wife. There was one Black woman who had two mentors during her four years; however, she was diversified and able to navigate the differences noted in her mentor-mentee relationship; however, she reports her mentoring needs were not met as an emerging leader. There was one white mentee who was paired with a white mentor and requested a new mentor because of a personality conflict. The head of the cohort met with me and agreed now that the failure of the program was the pairing of mentoring.

In adopting an interdisciplinary idea and theory in formalizing a model for culturally congruent mentoring, it is necessary to have effective ministerial leaders' training. There were eight barriers and eight keys for successful mentoring I observed during the four years in the program.

Barriers of Mentors in Ministry

- Mentor can use prior knowledge of a mentee inappropriately and create barriers
- Mentor can be inflexible and lack current trends of communication
- Mentor can be resistant to change or learn new skills of communication
- Mentor can lack experience and training in cultural sensitivity
- Mentor has minimal diversity network
- Mentor has limited expectations of mentee's ability
- Mentor fails to experience a learning exchange
- Mentor is not a stakeholder for the advancement of the mentee

Keys for Transformative Mentorship in Leadership

- Connection
- Compassion
- Spiritual Intelligence for change

- Self-care awareness
- Emotional Intelligence
- Pedagogic Support
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Expectation of transformative exchange

Unlike the experiences in CBTS's leadership program, it is essential that a mentor is honest on the initial meeting with the prospective mentee about their ability to facilitate a quality mentorship. If there is a possibility of a mismatch or the mentor is not proficient in the needed area of mentoring, there should be a referral or acknowledgment that they are unable to provide the desired service. The mentor should have several assessment tools to determine match, need of the mentee, and a pre-assessment for baseline and post-assessment to evaluate progress of the growth gleaned. The experience further confirms the necessity for minimal consideration of cultural congruence. Secondly, the mentor must understand her theological perspective, while allowing the mentee to learn and decide upon her own theology. This provides foundation and fortitude to her "why and how" as she leads effectively in her context

Conclusion

The study results should reflect the importance of trained mentors in both traditional and non-traditional ministries. This is why integrating an interdisciplinary approach and theory like social psychology and self-determination are important in offering a culturally congruent model. This prevents from leading solely from practical methods without considering cultural and contextual difference. A faith base versus secular mentoring constructs and operates with principles and strategies drafted by the marketplace. I am not discounting those resources; however, I bring to the table

experience of leadership and mentorship from secularism, healthcare, and faith-base and parachurch institutions.

The comparison and contrast of mentor versus coach was looked at because of the extensive usage of the two terms and the debate around their meaning, creating widespread misinterpretation.¹⁹ This project will develop a women's ministerial mentor-mentee model that can be used by seminarians, church-trained leaders, and parachurch group leaders for assistance with supportive mentee self-discovery in leadership as they learn to navigate the development of building capacity for sustainability in ministry. The mentor-mentee fosters lifelong relationships when appropriately cultivated.

The usefulness of social psychology and self-determination modalities have encouraged and affirmed my thoughts regarding the pursuit for a culturally congruent mentoring model. The power of Black girl's magic future relies on the innovation and training for efficacy in leadership. To add more concreteness to the mentoring model, I will continue to study each foundation and revisit selected discipline and theory. This chapter was key in bringing a connection to the entire project and consequently, enables me to complete the project analysis.

¹⁹ Chiroma and Cloete, "Mentoring as a supportive pedagogy in theological training," 1-8.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter will review the project and conduct an analysis of the data collected from the cohort of women of Color who participated in the study. The convergence of the spiritual autobiography and contextual analysis affirmed and confirmed the need for culturally congruent mentoring and leadership training for Black women in the ministry. It was from the synergy of this project, from design through implementation, that the researcher clearly visualized lessons from my life journey. What proved salient for me and other Black women in leadership was the need to practice self-care and seek culturally congruent mentorship for honing professional development.

Research Design

The employing of pre- and post-questionnaires (see Appendix C) and assessment tools provided a baseline for measuring attitudinal change from beginning to the end of the project. The data collection instruments included a self-evaluation of well-being via Energy Management Questionnaire (see Appendix D), LINKED personality type assessment (see Appendix E), and a Spiritual Gifts Assessment (see Appendix G). To assist with creating core value statements, Don Ruiz Miguel's book *Laws of Agreement* was utilized. The results of these instruments were reviewed with the mentees to increase

awareness of how and why they lead as they do. Keys to emotional intelligence is the beginning of improving how one uses the 4C's (courage, conviction, creativity, and collaboration) as Black women in leadership.

Additionally, during the implementation of monologues and dialogues, various exercises increased the participants' understanding of the self-assessments amplifying understanding family origin and culture to current status and social location. This showed how social psychology and learning are connected as they interfaced in groups and one-on-one. The importance of the participants identifying and understanding how and why they lead, respond, work, and serve in praxis can empower their leadership style and created a verbal sense of confirmation as observed in group conversations.

Social psychology converged the idea of culture congruence — the key factor for effective leadership mentoring among Black women. It was during their transparency and vulnerability that they saw they all had similar experience during leadership but no solutions until they listened to how one another resolved leadership concerns. They all sighed with relief — freedom to share unashamed.

Typically shame and inhibition are dysfunctions that hamper growth when mentored by non-culturally congruent mentors. This has become apparent in my journey as well as that of other Black women in leadership that I have talked with who were mentored by white women. Inhibition during conversation occurred because vernacular and cultural movements were not understood and assumed negative to the mentor. During the implementation, Allport's definition of social psychology became clearly visible in the methods used to prove the hypothesis to the project's problem. For example, in the participants' conversations, a self-image video revealed the effect of negative words. These words spoken into their lives created poor self-images that they

carried from childhood impacting how they viewed themselves and their leadership style.

The research group of participants voiced names or images spoken on them and how it made them feel or behave. The participants during this time became tearful, some angry, and others had no comment. Those without comment sat with a blank affect. When, I discussed this with a white woman who mentors, she could not understand why this was carried into adulthood after being trained professionally. She viewed the video with me and still could not see the connection of the word imagery that was so easily identified among the Black women in the project to be an issue of restraining effectiveness.

Social psychology is the scientific study of how we feel about, think about, and behave toward the people around us and how our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are influenced by those people. As this definition suggests, the subject matter of social psychology is very broad and can be found in just about everything that we do every day.¹

It is important for a mentor to have awareness of how feelings empower emotional intelligence and can decrease the probability of becoming stagnant in life and vocation. The project design created attitudinal changes, thus the exercises selected allowed for personal evaluation of perception and cognition. Thus, as leaders, when one can manage personal shifts in attitudes, one becomes more effective in their context. Research by Norman Triplett looked at how attitude affect's behavior and how much science around cultural context is questioned.² This DMin project looked at how learning

¹ Charles Stagnor, Rajiv Jhanigiani, and Hammond Tarry, *Principles of Social Psychology*, 1st International Edition, 2014, 17, <https://kora.kpu.ca/islandoraobject/kora%3A552/datatrastream/PDF/view>.

² Kenneth Gergen, "On the Very Idea of Social Psychology," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 71, no. (December 2008): 10.

and retraining in a culturally congruent mentoring setting impacts positively on persons in groups and individually.

Cultural congruence mentoring in the project suggested the importance of learning self-love and applying “mind talk” and “social talk” as Kenneth Gergen asserts in his book *On the Very Idea of Social Psychology*.³ It was during our conversational exchange that they were able to redirect mind talk as new skills showed social talk improvement in our circle of trust sessions. The exchange that occurred during the implementation with the participants galvanized discussions that allowed them to root out mental word imagery that affected their self-perception and how they engaged in conversations in groups as leaders. This was a breakthrough for all the women as the researcher watched their light bulbs come on as they talked, cried, laughed, and gleaned new word images for better social talk; however, to further assist with this model, developing innovative Black women in leadership proved the need for the assigned reading “laws of agreement” that was given to aid with strategies for retraining “mind talk” and “social talk” during selfcare.

The participants began to understand the significance of reading the book, *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz. The assignment was formatted to rebuild a foundation of personal core values and create their four laws of agreement for daily affirmation. The assignment assisted with relinquishing negative self-talk.

How Black women learn is not always in a classroom but in our world where self-concept is developed by others’ responses and evaluation of behavior shaping thoughts and actions. The project postulated that self-concept (self-discovery) is foundational for

³ Gergen, “On the Very Idea of Social Psychology,” 333.

Black women who lead in ministry. If this cultural element is not understood by the mentor, this can further damage or add to stagnation of the mentee preventing her leading self-efficaciously. A leader who does not understand the power of the tongue can be dangerous in developing future leaders. Thus, it is important that the reader understands that the project is designed to show that being mentored is beneficial for their personal self-identity, self-care, and self-validation. Secondly, it provided professional development for novice and seasoned leaders in the context of a model in culturally congruent mentoring for leading Black women as mentors in their context.

Observation of self-determination was awakened among the project participants with increased provocative conversation. Like Elizabeth and Mary's experience, the participants dialogue affirmed their calls, creating a sense of worth and self-discovery as noted when Mary recited the Magnificat. The idea of their being resilient in context during adversity became doable as they encouraged, supported, and congratulated one another for beginning to press forward. They saw they were not alone and listened to one another's strategies to move to the next level of leadership. As the researcher watched new relationships form, they began building accountability partners to one another without prompting.

The solution to leading as a mentor implies that "teaching wisdom and skills" is foundational to self-discovery, using the instruments employed to address the problem in the project. The problem was a lack of Black women ministers to lead as mentors in a safe space identified as quasi-incubator as a cohort. This mentorship model demonstrated the solution for effective mentorship among culturally congruent mentor-mentees with support of pedagogy facilitated by implementation with assessment tools, dialogue, skill building, and reflection in groups and individually in an environment of social

acceptance. The researcher suggests that mentorship is the CPR of the spirit, mind, and soul. Dr. Katherine Brown teaches young women emerging in leadership that Courage + Persistence = Resilience.⁴ It reminds the mentor and mentee to be resilient during challenges as a leader. This “bounce back” requires courage and persistence to be resilient.

This project achieved foundational take-away caveats on the intrinsic importance of thinking theologically as a Black woman in traditional and non-traditional contextual spaces of ministry. These schools of thought are necessary to solidify the platform weapon of why I argue that culturally congruent leadership equipping is compulsory among women of Color in traditional and non-traditional ministries. There is a need to understand adopting and the use of embedded theology versus those of systematic theology to navigate effectively. Theology provides another source of why one leads in ministry and why cultural congruence is beneficial. The necessity of culturally congruent mentoring during some phase of development among Black women in leadership were confirmed:

- the bond and relationships bridged easier
- limited apprehensiveness, conflicts, and apprehensions
- the mentee mirrors self-awareness learning from mentor
- the mentor and mentee identify more likeness than differences.
- monologue and dialogue disclose transformative exchange between the mentor and mentee
- the mentee is affirmed and gains confidence to pursue fulfilling her call

⁴ Katherine Brown, “Speech,” Nashville Cable Luncheon for Women, Founder of Katherine Brown Young Leaders’ Academy, Nashville, Tennessee, March 8, 2023.

The hypothesis is if Black women in ministry lead as mentors as a type of midwife, it will facilitate transformative support birthing vision for both novice and stagnant women ministers to become content and confident while demonstrating measurable successful ministry leaders.

Methodology of Research Design

Scientific Model

The infrastructure of the project foundation is constructed with narrative of the Bible, use of figures of our history, and tri-axis theological perspectives that intersect the theory of self-determination as the platform for quality development of a model for leadership mentoring among Black women in ministry. To further build on developing the mentoring model for innovative Black women in ministry with supportive pedagogical practices for self-efficacy in leadership, measurements must occur to assess the mentor and mentees performance.

The mix methodology ethnographic qualitative research and Integrated Science model were used to test the hypothesis. The methodologies were triangulated with assessments, interviews, and journals, intersected with observations of the focus group participation. Initially, there were twelve persons in groups of threes for a total of four groups. Two women decided they did not need mentoring and they dropped out. Thus, we finally began with ten women and four dropped out due to work schedule, family, and illness. The study ended with six women in groups of two for a total of three groups, except when executing short range goals which required groups of three (observer,

mentor, and mentee). Some of the sessions were recorded on ZOOM and others were face-to-face activities. Reading material from various resources were incorporated for focus groups weekly to encourage reflective dialogue during workshops.

The Integrated Scientific Model (ISM) allowed for use of primitive concepts derived to support ideas of interest that do not exist but are implied. For example, cultural congruence speaks to an understanding of leading with the awareness of triple consciousness and the motifs of tri-axis theological perspectives created to include three different schools of theology. Both research methods allowed for the success of the project subscribing often to results that were not always tangible. For example, the participants shared growth in the area of emotional intelligence using “mind talk” and “social talk” to shift out of overextending themselves and practice the tool of self-care.

The other reason the Integrated Scientific Model was implemented is because it is a model of scientific action. It allows the principal investigator to synthesize ideas from many discipline perspectives such as science, social science, philosophy, theology, psychology, and the like. This model further justified including ideology from interdisciplinary schools of thought, theories, and theology to add foundation to the project. It also informed selection of data collection instruments for analyzing the approaches: interviews, questionnaires, observations, workshops, journaled entries, and assessment results.

The approaches provided a broad dimension of interaction with the participants to determine repetitive thought processes on the same question of the necessity of culturally congruent mentorship. It allowed for expressions, answering questions in conversation, and writing in journals. The pre-assessment for baseline well-being gave a measuring guide for change of habit and attitude in the post well-being assessment. The goal is to

provide a cohort that serves as an incubator with organized graduated experiential learning modules weekly. This includes pre- and post-assessments of personality types, motivational gifting, and self-care training with mentoring leadership strategies in a safe environment.

The method created attitudinal change by honing skill sets. Secondly, it demystified Black female servant leadership as a burden mule or her leading as a task master. Each implies no time for personal care. Time management that does not have scheduled time for self leads to a loss of identity, self-conceptualization, and poor well-being. Self-awareness is lost in all parameters of balance living factors that detrimentally impact one's spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. The project design re-ignited vision in the participants to continue in ministerial leadership.

Instruments for Data Point Collection Outline

What follows is a data point collection outline that seeks to lay out some needed instruments in self-discovery in mentor and mentee leadership work:

1. Survey 120 women (to obtain more questions and concerns from leaders)
Preliminary - subjective qualitative study
2. Selection of twelve students and ten started the cohort
3. Reading assignments of a chapter and book: Linda E. Thomas' "The Holy Spirit and Black Women: Womanist Perspective," and Don Ruiz's *Law of Agreement* book. (Critical thinking qualitative study)
4. Application of Linked Personality Test⁵ (see Appendix E) as mentee, observer, and mentor with goals (Linked Personality)
5. Interviews and individual meet and greet (observation qualitative)

⁵ Linked Personalities: Maximizing Your Personal and Professional Relationships, "Linked Personality Quiz," <https://www.linkedpersonalities.com/linked-personality-quiz/>.

6. Focus Group workshops and implementation (professional/context/associates subjects provided assistance and guidance during the process)

Mentoring Program Questionnaire

The Mentoring Program Questionnaire (see Appendix H) was needful and provided necessary data to ascertain the thought processes, growth, and development of the participants. Some of the questions highlighted are listed below.

- Have you ever consider contracting a mentor to hone skills in ministerial or business as a leader? (A) Yes, (B) No, (C) Never considered.
- The spiritual direction from your spiritual mother/father: is it effective for promotion of professional development and sustainability in pastoral ministry or business? (A) Yes, (B) No, (C) Never considered.

Management of Energy ... a Wellbeing Questionnaire

Another tool used in the assessment process was the Management of Energy ... a Wellbeing Questionnaire (see Appendix D). Some of the areas explored here are body, emotions, mind, and spirit. Below are some of the areas explored in this assessment.

- In the assessment for the “body,” one item explored was: “I don’t regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired.”
- In the “emotion” area, one of the queries was: “I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work, especially when work is demanding.”
- In the “mind” area, one query read: “I have difficulty focusing on one thing at time, and I am easily distracted during the day, especially be e-mail.”
- In the “spirit” area, one query read: “I don’t spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most.”

These areas explored were very helpful with the participants having to explore some needful areas while giving the researcher valuable data to glean from supporting the hypothesis.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Another instrument used was the Spiritual Gifts Inventory. This instrument provided the participants with areas to explore while ascertaining the discovery and acknowledgement of their own gifts. Some of the areas explored were:

- I prefer ministering by myself rather than in a group
- People often say I am impulsive and direct
- My financial resources are above average
- I like to counsel people on a short-term basis
- I am a task-oriented person

For the entire list of questions, (see Appendix G).

LINKED: A Quick-Assessment To Recognize Your Personality

Another assessment tool used to work with the participants was a LINKED instrument (see Appendix E). It explored four primary areas: mobilizer, socializer, organizer, and stabilizer.

Implementation and Data Collection

The implementation, outcomes, summary of learning, future goals, and conclusion of the project are discussed here. Data collection and analysis of the project's experimental findings are in this section. The research project was a two-fold process completed in a total of eight weeks.

Initially, the meeting had a hovering sense of apprehension as observed by the body language of the mentees by the researcher. The women did not know one another on a personal level and were trying to determine status and purpose for mentoring participation as discovered later in conversation. The initial meeting consisted of a meditative workshop designed to encourage the participants to relax and drop their guards.

The meditative workshop opened with a soul check question: “Are you tired of leading alone?” Some nodded and some said “Amen.” The pericope was taken from Matthew 11:28 (NRSV): “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest.” I reflected on the purpose of the yoke during this time period as a tool of training the novice and to provide physical support to the novice animal. The veteran knows how to navigate when plowing, limit the load, and where to trod. Being yoked together decreased the burden for the two animals and trained the novice. If the novice was resistant to the training, the yoke and burden became uneasy and the burden heavier. If resisted, the yoke created a tug, and probably pain, to correct the direction of the novice while increasing the weight. Like mentoring, the researcher explained that we are being yoked together for exchange of wisdom and knowledge to be able to navigate as innovative Black women in leadership. There will be uncomfortable places on the journey, but experience and trust are importance for the mentoring process to be successful. The researcher closed with the reminder that God is answering their many prayers for the birth of a child as he did for Hannah.

The researcher watched tears stream down faces, heads nod, and expressions of relief on their faces. We prayed, they hugged, and we began to share what we hoped to gain from being yoked together as mentor and mentees.

The following is a compilation of the eight-weeks implementation of sessions modeling a culturally congruent mentoring model for innovative Black women's efficacy in leadership.

Preliminary Steps Taken

Week 1: September 9th

I began with creating a cohort of women for the project. A pre-questionnaire survey went out on September 9th to 120 people listed on the BBC mailing list. These recipients were asked to respond within a week's time. Seventy-eight women responded. Twelve names were randomly selected and finalized for the cohort. First, the mentor-mentee project participants were selected from the pool of women who attend Beyond Boundary Consulting events. Upon interview and acceptance to participate, they were given full disclosure of the project and time for questions and answers. Each participant signed a research participation (consent) agreement (see Appendix B) per the IRB of the school.

The researcher met with individual participants privately September 9, 2022, at Fisk University Library (10:00 am to 6:00 pm) for the first session. There were twelve women and two women later decided to discontinue the process. There was a fifteen-minute discussion by the project leader articulating the purpose and scope of the project. The consent forms were reviewed and signed by all twelve participants. Each potential member was allowed to voluntarily share why they wanted to participate and what they anticipated from the group.

Week 2: Preliminary Implementation: September 16th

The researcher emailed each of the mentee participants for follow-up and thanked them for considering participating. The researcher extended an invitation to them to contact her if anyone had a question. The researcher provided a separate phone number for the participants to contact her if an emergency arose. They were asked to download the pdf of Don Miquel Ruiz's book *Laws of Agreement* to draft core values for development of a personal mantra over the next six weeks.

Week 3: September 24th

The first actual session of the implementation began with orientation and assessment with the first workshop held at Fisk University (10:00 am 12:00 pm). The context associate, Elder Allyson Young, attended. Fifteen minutes was given to the welcome, group networking time, and review of purpose of the project. A twenty-five-minute time slot was given to the "Meditative Lesson" on Matthew 11:28. A Dove video created engagement among the group. Via a Zoom session, Dr. Evelyn Taylor made a fifteen-minute presentation on the "Journey of Women in Ministry." Dr. Karen Ferguson gave a presentation on "Why Invest in Counseling." After this, twenty-minutes was given to taking a self-care assessments test and there was a discussion of the results. (This data was collected by the researcher). Group assistants passed out journals and the group looked at the pdf "Laws of Agreement" to create personal statements with core values to relinquish poor self-image and to stop negative talk. Assignments included a selfcare assessment and plan to begin the following week. The Daily Journal Inventory format provided a guide to soul care in preparation for journal writing. A handout was given for

an eight-minute morning exercise — provided that permission was given by their health care provider. The session concluded with prayer

Week 4: September 30th

The second actual session of the implementation was held at Scarritt Bennett Center – Nashville, Tennessee – in the labyrinth for a Sabbath moment of reflection and walk in solitude. Parker Palmer’s book, *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*, was used visiting his *Lectio Divino* style of contemplation before commencing the labyrinth walk for reflection during solitude. The sharing of photos and fellowship followed by a covenant meal in the dining hall to build a circle of trust. The group later attended a vesper jazz service on the said campus followed with a discussion of the experience. A review of the day allowed time to share journaling, self-care management plan development, and implementation. Prayer and dismissal concluded the day. Time was given to administer the Personality identification tool. Time was given to discuss “isolation” and how to manage it. Attention was also given to self-reflect on a self-care plan. Context associate pastor Marie King attended and shared in mentoring engagement.

Week 5: October 7th

This third session was held on the campus of Fisk University. After a review of the previous week discussion, the workshop centered on personality and leadership styles and how the pros and cons can impact one’s ministry. Dr. Evelyn Taylor and I led a workshop on listening activity and navigating conflicts in one’s context. An awareness of

one's self-awareness and knowing something about the personality characteristics of others is important for mentors and mentees. Time was devoted to two or three participants sharing their theology and the practice of ministry. For homework, the participants were encouraged to work on a self-care plan and write a paragraph for a short-range goal. The session concluded with prayer and dismissal.

Week 6: October 14th.

This session began with a review of the previous week. This was followed by the participants engaging in an exercise of "a circle of trust." A reveal party exercise dealt with the participant's guessing the personality assessments of others followed by responses. A discussion took place on the status of each participant's self-care plan shared and any self-discoveries. Participants were given enough time to update their ministerial clarity, insights, and goals. The session came to an end with prayer and dismissal.

Week 7: October 21st

This session was held at Fisk University. After moments of greeting and check-in, instructions were given to set up a rotation of "mentor/mentee/observer" exercise. Each person had the opportunity to sit in one of the positions and then rotate thus ensuring that every person had an opportunity and vantage point to view all three positions. This was followed by a discussion. Another block of time was devoted to discussion about methods to accomplish and measure tools of success. The session came to a close with prayer and sending forth.

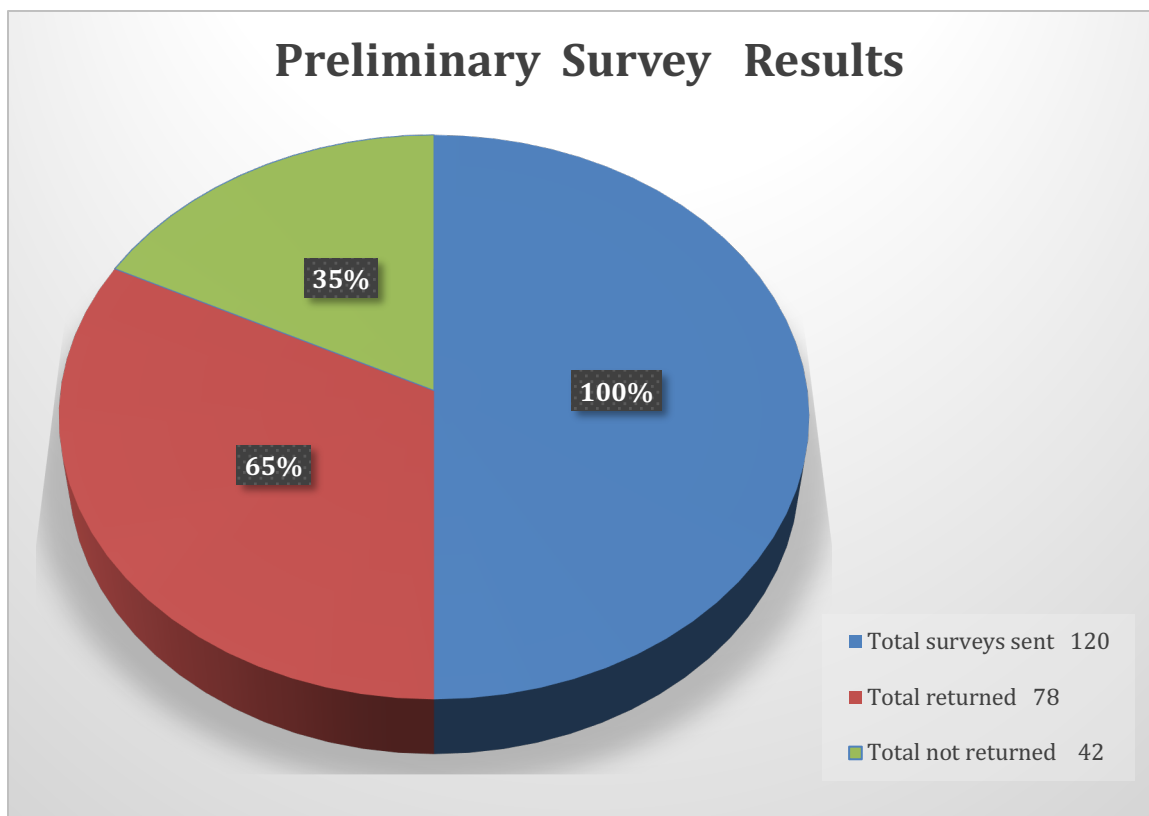
Week 8: October 28th

This session was held at Fisk University implementing the Mentoring Circle of Trust exercise. This time was devoted to a continuation of the “mentor/mentee/observer” exercise. They learned to listen and guide with presence and seek to identify goals.

Week 9: October 31st - Debriefing

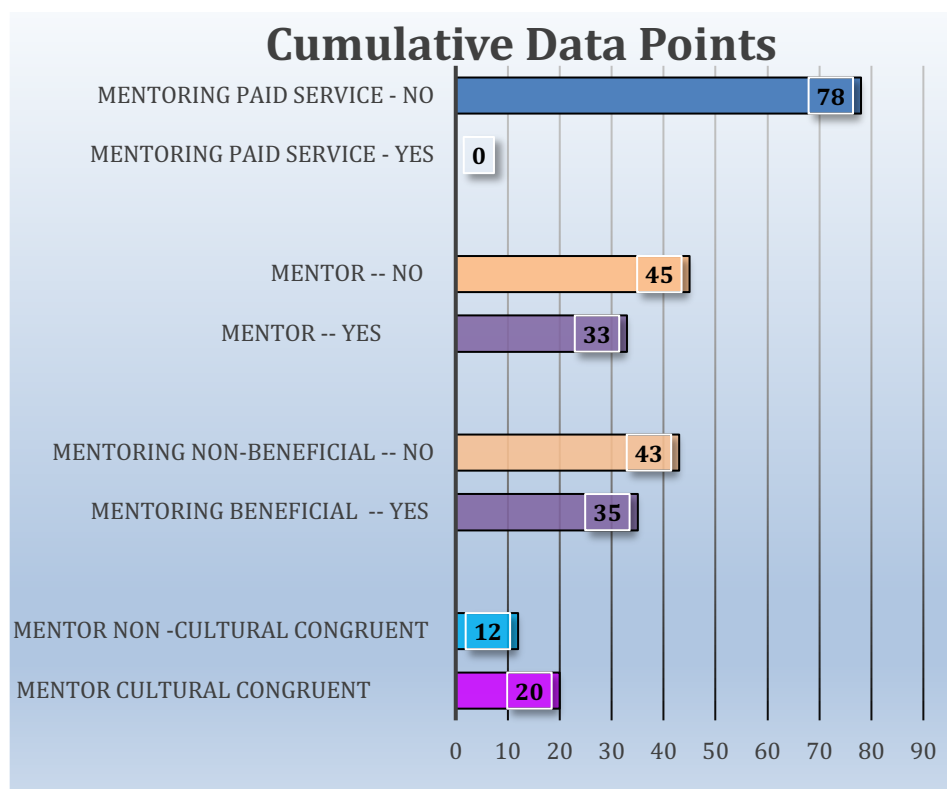
A discussion of each participant’s self-care plan was shared along with any self-discoveries. This was followed by debriefing and celebration of the completion of the mentorship project. After the sharing of goodbyes, the group was dismissed.

Analysis of Results



This pie chart above represents the 120 women that the survey was sent to and the results. Those completed and returned was 78/120 (65%) and the total without a response was 42/120 (35%). The survey served as a baseline from contextual women of Beyond Boundary Consulting. Their responses were similar to the response of the pre-questionnaire which supports the need for mentors in a culturally congruent cohort.

The Cumulative Data Points from the Survey/Questionnaire



Spiritual Gifts Assessment Results

SUBJECT	CAREER	MINISTRY	PRIMARY Gift	SECONDARY Gift	TEIRETARY Gift	AGREE OR DEGREE
Z0ZV1	counselor	Minstrel	Exhortation	Teacher	Helps	Agree
Z0ZV2	Metro Police Admin	Intercessor (Deacon Wife)	Helps	Mercy	Teacher	Agree
Z0ZV3	Entrepreneur	Minister	Exhortation	Prophecy	Teacher	Agree
Z0ZV4	Banker	Minister	Mercy	Helps	Teacher	Agree
Z0ZV5	Director of college students	Elder/Minister	Teacher	Exhortation	Mercy	Agree
Z0ZV8	Housewife	First Lady Minister	Prophecy	Helps	Teacher	Agree

The mentees all agreed with the results of the spiritual gift assessment although Z0ZV8 was surprised that her primary gift was prophecy. The gift of teacher was 100% visible among the women, which is a skillset necessary for mentoring. The gift of helps was found among 65%; the gift of Mercy was 33%; the gift of exhortation 50%; Prophecy results were 33%; and lastly, there was 17% of the women with the gift of giver. These percentages are the calculated values of the cohort. The concern for the principal investigator is the probability of this being skewed based on the mentee post-discussion. This tendency of the mindset, motives, and desired outcome determines how questions are answered, which is a typical finding observed in other groups when a post discussion occurs.

Pre- Assessment Self-Care Base Line

SUBJECT	CAREER	SPIRIT	SOUL	MIND	BODY	COMMENTS
Z0ZV1	Minstrel	3	3	3	2	Wife, mother and in MIT
Z0ZV2	Intercessor	4	2	2	1	Grief/depression
Z0ZV3	Minister	3	2.5	2.5	0	No time for anything
Z0ZV4	Minister	4	2	1	2.5	Young widow raised 3 children
Z0ZV5	Elder/Minister	3	1	1	2.5	Single/divorce/military
Z0ZV8	Minister	3	2.5	2.5	2.5	3 young children
Total		20	13	12	9	

The primary focus among the women needing lifestyle modification for better self-care are shown. The following baseline statistics were: Spirit care 67%, Soul care 43%, Mind care 40%, and Body care 30%. The two areas in the group that needed most work to create more balance was in the area of mind and body care.

Post-Assessment Self-Care after 4 -5 weeks

The post assessment showed a positive increase in corrective lifestyle modification for better self-care. The following are area statistics: Spirit care 88%, Soul care 60 %, mind care 55%, and Body care 58%. The two areas in the group that need most work to create more balance was in the area of mind and body care.

SUBJECT	CAREER	SPIRIT	SOUL	MIND	BODY	COMMENTS
Z0ZV1	Minstrel	4	3	3	3.5	Wife, mother and in MIT Partially followed selfcare plan
Z0ZV2	Intercessor	4.5	2	2	1	Grief/depression No energy to implement. self-care plan
Z0ZV3	Minister	4	3	25	3	Implemented plan 3 times per week Hired a personal trainer
Z0ZV4	Minister	5	3	3	4	Young widow raised 3 children.
Z0ZV5	Elder/ Minister	5	3	3	3	Implemented Selfcare plan 2. Days per week
Z0ZV8	Minister	4	3	3	3	3 Young children Implemented selfcare plan 2 days per week
Total		26.5	18	16.5	17.5	

Self-care plan implementation showed the following statistical improvement

- Spirit Care 21%
- Soul Care 23%
- Mind Care 0%
- Soul Care 20%

The findings showed that the group members had follow through with their self-care plan; however, the mental/mind care had net zero change. It was more difficult to

rest their minds, obtain counseling, or practice mindfulness than any of the other three self-care parameters.

Personality Assessment Results

SUBJECT	CAREER	MINISTRY	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TEIRETARY	AGREE OR DEGREE
Z0ZV1	Licensed counselor	Minstrel	Socializer 9	Stabilizer 9	Mobilizer 5	Totally agrees and see the connection with exhorter
Z0ZV2	Metro Police Admin	Intercessor (Deacon wife)	Stabilizer10	Organizer 9	Mobilizer 5	Laughed because although quiet she agrees with results.
Z0ZV3	Entrepreneur	Minister	Mobilizer 8	Stabilizer 7	Organizer 6	Disagreed with stabilizer
Z0ZV4	Banker	Minister	Stabilizer 17	Organizer 6	Socializer 2	
Z0ZV5	Director of college student	Elder /Minister	Organizer 10	Stabilizer 9	Mobilizer 5	She agreed and concerned that has not progressed in ministry
Z0ZV8	Housewife	First lady Minister	Stabilizer 8	Organizer 7	Mobilizer 6	She was amazed primarily because she thinks she is shy.



Results of Personality Assessment.

Quick decode:

Are you the Get-it-done Mobilizer? Yellow
 Perhaps you're the Life-of-the-party Socializer! Red
 The Keep-it-peaceful Stabilizer, maybe that's you? Green
 You may be the Everything-in-order Organizer. Blue

The results of the personality test were observed to be most beneficial to the women in the group. During the workshop, they maintained their results and actually were able to identify one another's primary personality types. There were discussions around understanding why conflicts occurred with other personality types in the LINKED Personality profile description. The women all agreed recognizing and acknowledging their personality type was a resource that would change how they lead. They understood their "why" of how they led as they did.

Their discovery also offered clarity around conflict solutions that did not work and why; this was based on understanding both the positive and negative characteristics of the four personality types. When asked about the understanding of awareness regarding emotional intelligence and confidence level after their findings, the group agreed they had gained confidence to lead in an uninhibited manner. They articulated a new type of identity and validation as leaders now that they have discovered the meaning of their approach to leading. It was agreed that they were better prepared to manage self-care to ensure their responses were more appropriate being conscious of characteristics of gifts and personality types of self and others. Mentoring aids them in embracing the importance of tools they need to lead effectively.

Conclusion

The study results reflected the importance of trained mentors in both church and parachurch groups of women who often lead from a practical method. Frequently, in traditional and nontraditional ministerial leadership, Black women lead without considering contextual differences. Thus, the study provided a forum for a group of women from faith based and secular constructs. They were able to continue operating

with principles and strategies drafted by the marketplace and the church. This was important to understand clarity of their “why” for leadership as they discerned identity, value of self-care, and practiced self-validation.

The researcher is not discounting their previous resources of training; however, the project brought to the table refinement from a culturally congruent perspective of leadership via mentorship via self-discovery for capacity building and sustainability. The comparison and contrast of mentor versus coach was discussed because of the extensive usage of the two terms and the debate around their meaning, creating widespread misinterpretation.⁶ This doctoral project developed a women’s ministerial mentor-mentee model that can be used by seminarians, church trained leaders, and parachurch group leaders for assistance with supportive mentee self-discovery in leadership. It is a tool to enhance fortitude as they navigate the development of building capacity for sustainability in ministry. The mentor-mentee fosters lifelong relationships when appropriately cultivated.

The replicable research design, “A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model for Innovative Black Women’s Efficacy in Leadership,” demonstrated how relational congruence deconstructed blockades that inhibit Black female fulfillment in traditional and nontraditional ministerial leadership. The hypothesis was proven that when Black women in ministry are paired with mentors of the same culture in a quasi-incubator (cohort), this facilitated support encouraged mentees to engage in transformative learning. The mentor model targeted Black novice and stagnant women in ministry.

⁶ Chiroma and Cloete, “Mentoring as a supportive pedagogy in theological training,” 1-8.

There was one bi-racial female who requested to stay in the project as she wanted to be mentored by a Black female. Each of them from day one was elated to be propelled into the next level with confidence as self-discovered leaders — mentor to mentor. The project proved the necessity of a curriculum that included self-care, along with didactic leadership models coupled with personality and relationship building workshops, time management, and homiletic refinement. The tools for the mentees are weapons to combat allostatic overload.

If the participants (mentees) continue to employ the new strategic skills, they will be healthy in spirit, soul, and body. During the six weeks, the mentees realized that they had to be intentional, or they would slip back into old habits easily. It was important to learn that they had to protect their schedules placing time restrictions on care for spirit, mind, and body as well as professional development. Per the pre- and post-questionnaires, there was a 95% attitudinal change in time management understanding — a task list versus a schedule assignment as boundary to personal self-care. The women gained 100% clarity of ministry calling and transitioned into those areas. Overall, there was a 100% recognition, 85% implementation, and 100% desire to continue being mentored for debriefing and accountability of self-care. The project assisted Black women in leadership to realize their value as a Black woman, sharpen skills, and develop the understanding for mentoring — bringing another alongside of them to continue legacy in their context.

The global journey of the DMin project at United Theological Seminary was one of absolute affirming of who I am as a Black woman striving for excellence in leadership. In reflection, the trajectory of my experience allowed me to see the importance of collaboration with the Holy Spirit differently. Why? Black women have a unique

relationship with the Holy Spirit — some call it Black magic. This is essential amidst the struggle for a voice of equality and liberation in order to blossom. In my vocation, I have learned the importance of “stopping, looking and listening” to the spirit in all aspects of my life as a plumb line for life decisions to achieve purpose. It is during the development and implementation of this project that I have understood that I cannot do it all. In terms of putting everything on the paper, I am learning to save some for later. This is a common thread among Black woman (type A personality — over extension), thus proving the statistic of disease among us secondary to allostatic overload (chronic stress that leads to illness).

This phase of leadership development, becoming vulnerable, is what sustained me through the program. This was accomplished by knowing that pausing some activities may not be enough; I needed to streamline my life. Secondly, learning to observe others created opportunities of learning and resting simultaneously. Thirdly, observation in silence with little input strengthens my inner self with a refreshing thrust to trust God and pursue goals. Last, let me say listening is not the same as observation. In this process, listening became a space of empathetic practice and treasure seeking for action steps for my life and those I would encounter in leadership.

Prior to this journey as a visionary, I would immediately conceptualize ideas and move forward to implementation. The project has created for me the value of timelines, process, and listening. Now, I understand that although God’s unction helps one to do a task, the success is based upon the process and time of the plan. In other words, the phases between vision and fruit must be done one at a time. In this context of training, it was different from any school attended, but I learned to trust the process. The process of papers, intensives, and meetings all were part of a larger plan that taught me to see steps

between finishing. This was one of the threads of concerns I mentioned in my spiritual autobiography in the various ministries and organization of which I have participated. Typically, there was a see the vision and do without process. Initially in this journey, I thought it was poor planning when the vision execution was not as successful. Now I know it is not only planning of the vision but also the logistical pieces in between that provide infrastructure of stability for capacity building and sustainability.

The objective throughout this study has been to merge and assimilate the findings of didactic study, research, and personal and professional experience around the themes of mentorship to facilitate the usage of culturally congruent pairing of women in both traditional and nontraditional ministry. The study showed that Black women in a culturally congruent cohort form relationships easier, understand clichés, recognize, and respect embedded theology, and value discernment of gifts and talents without threat. Last, they tend to support and aid one another without characteristics of suspicion, jealousy, or competition to bring others along. The characteristics were discovered on my ministerial journey and proved to be consistently productive when applied in teaching settings with others.

The future of the project outcomes includes writing an academic paper for journal publication. Currently, an article is being pitched for submission and is being evaluated by *Christianity Today*. I will continue to develop and implement models for mentoring Black women in leadership to lead others as mentors. For example, I intend to write a book and workbook. The book will incorporate technology-based approaches such as curriculum with lecture videos, vignettes, and online course platforms. The various formats of the information gained will be packaged to provide viable and flexible alternatives to supplement traditional educational and mentoring approaches.

The challenges of completing the eight weeks of workshops and training allowed both the mentor and mentee to use the tools and practice skills gleaned during our sessions to stay focused on everyday life, ministry, work and attend school as wives, and mothers, who were either married, divorced, widowed and or single. The women participating came with a variety of mentoring questions and desires for change in the areas of well-being spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Each one voiced concern about personal care, and leadership.

There were a number of participants who needed expert care such as counseling, financial planning, and medical care. Those areas were necessary for their lifestyle modifications. This included weight loss, better eating habits, water consumption, exercise, emotional stabilization of anxiety, depression, and compounded grief secondary to serial deaths during COVID. It must be clear when a mentor accepts a mentee that they explain their role is not to serve as a licensed counselor or practitioner. The context has available a list of counselors for referrals and a resident counselor who provided a ZOOM workshop for the participants. A mentor should not attempt to take the person back into their life as related to therapy but move them forward.

The project continued to hone what is salient for my life and garner wisdom and knowledge for other Black women. During the project there was growth exchange between myself and the cohort, the mentors and mentee in my DMin project, as well as the contributions and discussion with the peer and professional associates. All these variables of the project enliven my journey as I joined the holy Spirit at work in my life. Using the theory of self-determination coupled with a modified womanist theological perspective in addition to an interdisciplinary approach of social psychology, I argued

that Black women have allow their insight into the power of the Spirit to point them to managing themselves first to be effective leaders (from vision to fruit).

The development of tri-axis theology, an amalgam of three different theological perspectives, was further ignited when I discovered Mary Magdalena Lewis Tate (1871-1930) as my primary historical figure. A hidden figure of both traditional and nontraditional leadership before her time, she was a visionary that ran to implement on first sight. In my opinion, she was off track (conflicted) in some cases due to demands and limited mentoring. For example, female leaders dressed in skirt suits similar to men, although married to men. Her legacy persists today in her domination as seen among Black woman in terms of a life that is Holy Spirit led, self-determination, mentoring, and multitalented — with a life of allostatic overload. Why did I mention her here? She is a classic model of one who needed culturally congruent mentoring to combat vision fog, allostatic overload, to ensure sustainability, and capacity building as a Black female leader. She is definitely a hero; however, as stated throughout the project, at some phase of leadership training, it is necessary for congruent training. The women who she modeled some skills after where white women.

The overall journey was one of learning and confirming my ministry focus that effective leadership among Black women requires culturally congruent mentoring not only for pedagogical leadership skills but to retrain the mindset of women prioritizing self for effectiveness. In summary, the project model proves to be a source of positive attitudinal, spiritual, and physical change for Black women in decreasing disparities in the church and healthcare.

Summary of Learning

This project is a model of culturally congruent mentoring for increased self-discovery in a community of women with similar cultural experiences offering a wholistic expression of sustainability as it relates to ministerial leadership among Black women. The project design groomed women to become confident in their vocation, paying it forward as mentors of other women in leadership. The act of paying it forward cannot be disregarded if legacy of effective leadership is to be continued. The value of clarity of self-actualization in terms of self-identity, self-care, and self-validation as learned in this project should ignite desire to pass this on via mentoring.

The execution of the project began with ten women and ended with six women. The process was not as cut and dry as I imagined while developing the proposal. The project was interrupted and postponed by deaths in my family, the mentee participants' family, work schedules, and mentee illness. Honestly, I thought the project was going to flow as many of the events my context provided for women in leadership. The contextual events were more controlled in terms of scheduling.

Similarly, the process was unlike my research experience at Meharry Medical College as a research assistant II employee. The college environment again was one of more manageable control; the subjects were animals readily available. Using the model of human subjects in this qualitative study required patience, determination, compassion, flexibility, and value of the information to be imparted to those participating.

Would I do it again? Absolutely. The experience of exchange is invaluable. The project planted seeds of confidence, clarity, and hope into the participants' personal care and leadership styles. The results also demonstrated attitudinal change in the mentees that they can be effective with the correct mentoring leader.

The project proved to be effective per the pre- and post-results demonstrating attitudinal change in value of identity, self-care, and self-validity. The participants did not want to end the project but continue. The two women who required counseling have begun professional counseling and are progressing with grief and childhood trauma. In my opinion, I would suggest that the project is replicable and would be equally successful, if not more so, with mentors available to aid in executing the cohort.

The major learning experience was to allow those who are guiding me through the process to listen differently to minimize frustration, anxiety, and time wasted. If I were to grade myself on the over process, it would be difficult because I desired to complete the project with more data in terms of the number of participants. As a result, the lasting lesson is that everything I envisioned and attempted will not be completed immediately but in phases just as the journey of my ministerial development unfolded in stages. The project can be replicated by applying the methods and instruments with hypothesis during implementation.

The value of my United Theological Seminary matriculation has increased the development of critical thinking abilities beyond embedded theology as I interacted in a pluralistic world. Skills in social talk and group discussion in the peer sessions and focus groups during intensives have increased my confidence. Oral and written communication has been honed as visible with an expression of contextual ministry focus. Those experiential moments have carried over in board meetings that have opened doors to my context receiving operational grants of 40k while in the program. If I were to admonish a prospective student, I would say do not be afraid of UTS's program, formats, and instructors, for these areas create space for academic and personal growth in a non-traditional circle of learning. You will have to do the work, but you are able to continue

ministry, family, work, and earn a doctoral degree. That is what I have grown to love about United.

During my matriculation at United Theological Seminary, four major deaths occurred along with other life crisis, yet the pursuit of the degree during those times was not as painful as it could have been. Leadership development here at UTS honed skills as I better learned to prioritize self-care, family, ministry, work, and school. This project has provided a new perspective as to how I will continue managing tasks and my schedule as a leader. What will that look like? Enjoy the ride more and go with the flow of God . . . life is more peaceful.

APPENDIX A
EVENT FLYER

United Theological Seminary

Doctorial Candidate : Karynthia Phillips invites you to Participate

WHAT : RESEARCH PROJECT: MENTORING WORKSHOPS FOR SELF DISCOVERY AND MINISTRY VISION
 CLARIFICATION. (SELF CARE PRACTICES, PERSONALITY AND GIFT IDENTIFICATION, AND MENTORING SKILLS FOR LEADERS)

WHO : BLACK WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

WHEN : SUMMER OF 2023 8 WEEKS MENTORING

WHERE : ZOOM CLASSES AND THE SOUTHEAST
 METRO PUBLIC LIBRARY

CONTACT: ELDER KARYNTHIA PHILLIPS 615-609-8970



★
 WOMEN MENTORING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am conducting a research study as part of my dissertation project in partial fulfillment of my Doctor of Ministry degree at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Research Title: A Culturally Congruent Mentoring Model for Innovative Black Women Efficacy Leadership

Project Director: Elder Karynthia Glasper Phillips

Purpose of Study:

This is a consent form for potential participants eighteen years or older. You have an option to take part in a research study on the value of women being mentored by women of the same cultural to experience support during self-discovery for the equipping of females to lead effectively in ministry. The goals of this form are to give you information about the study and to help you decide if you want to participate in the study.

Name of participant:

_____ Please print
first & last name

Please read and initial each section below.

(Your initials indicate you have read and understand each section)

The Research Project

_____ This project addresses a training model for women mentoring women that equips ministry leaders for ministry via self-discovery and clarification of call to serve more effectively in their context. The research question is: **if Black women in ministry are paired with mentors of same culture in a quasi-incubator (cohort), it will facilitate support that encourages mentees to engage in transformative self-discovery in both novice and stagnant women ministers into fulfilled, confident successful ministry leaders.**

Expectations of the Human Research Subject

_____ After my consent to participate in the study, I will complete a Pre-Project Questionnaires that will provide initial input for the project. The first three weeks I will discover my baseline for selfcare, complete a 20-30 min personality test, and identify active gifts of passion. Each week over eight weeks, I will attend the meetings, participate in the group discussions, write reflections, and participate in role play/skill building training. At the proposed time, I will complete Post-Project Questionnaire that will provide data for the project.

Inform consent form Karynthia Glasper Phillips

Consent

_____ I agree to participate in this project as a human research subject. I understand that at any point in this project I can withdraw my participation without explanation. I understand that if I elect to withdraw my participation, it will have no effect on my continued participation in other leadership events sponsored by Beyond Boundary Consulting/Institute. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation as a human research subject for this project.

Confidentiality

_____ I understand that this consent form, pre- and post-questionnaires, and other collected data will be maintained and stored in strict compliance with confidentiality by Reverend Marie King and Elder Karynthia Phillips. All electronic data will be deleted, all prayer journals will be destroyed/shredded at the Richards and Richards repository professional in Nashville, TN, after the final examination of the dissertation.

Risks for Human Research Subjects

_____ I do not foresee any risks in taking part of this research. I understand that my responses will be covered in anonymity and no one will be able to deduce from my responses my exact identity. If the Project Director chooses to use quotes from my feedback, it will be anonymous. My contributions to the study will be safeguarded from public view for the duration of the study.

Benefits of the Study

_____ I understand that the benefits of participating in this research would be to develop a better model of mentorship for supporting and training women who are stagnant or novices as leaders in both traditional and non-tradition ministries. Also, as a participant of this group I will gain more insight regarding the importance of selfcare in conjunction with how to recognize others personality types to assist with effective leadership by having emotional intelligence and awareness of both positive and negative attributes of personalities. I will have opportunities each week to network and nurture one another in their faith as they continue to answer the call in ministry.

_____ I agree to join this study and I offer my participation voluntarily and without coercion.

Contact: I am aware that I can contact the researcher, Elder Karynthia Phillips, for answers to questions related to this study directly at telephone: 615- 609-8970 or via email at Beyondboundaryconsulting@gmail.com.

I have read the contents of this consent form and I have received verbal explanations to all the questions I had and were answered to my satisfaction. I agree that by signing this consent form, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree with the terms as a

volunteer to participate in this study. Even though this consent form bears my signature, I understand I have the right to withdraw entirely without explanation and at any time.

Informed consent form Karynthia Glasper Phillips
**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT INFORMED CONSENT
FORM SIGNATURE SHEET**

(Volunteer) Date _____ Signature

Signature Date _____ Researcher

APPENDIX C

PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Pre and Post Questionnaire

Please take a moment and read the questions below and answer as thoroughly as possible.

1. How do you define the term mentor?

The objective of this question is to determine how the potential participant perceives the meaning of a mentor.

2. Who can or cannot serve as a mentor for a mentee?

This question will assess the participant's felt understanding of the components/qualities of a mentor or mentee.

3. How do you define leadership? Give an example.

This question will determine the perception of the participant's meaning of a leader considering her context (traditional pulpit, nontraditional outreach, public service or social entrepreneur, a business market).

4. What are the necessary components of mentorship a leader should be mindful of? Please explain.

This question will ascertain if the participants are aware of the importance of wholeness in terms of mentorship addressing a balanced lifestyle of care for spirit, soul, and body. It also will reflect her experience of mentorship in terms of spiritual direction, leadership grooming and identifying learning styles as relates to gift, and personality types.

5. Have you had a mentoring relationship in your life? If yes describe the relationship.

This question will assist with identifying those who come with experience of mentorship and what it was like. This will help in orientation and also clarify what they can expect during the implementation of the project.

6. At what level would you rank your leadership skills?

The goal of this question is to determine the level of skill set that the participants have in preparation for the workshop/training during implementation. For instance, there may be 8 veteran leaders, 1 novice, and 2 beginners. I want to be able to provide training for all levels to ensure a fruitful experience for everyone.

7. How important are interrelation skills with those you lead?

This question will assess relational understanding especially since there will be group activities and information provided on bonding and networking as key components of ineffective leadership and ministry capacity building. This question will also help clarify responses in question 4.

8. How long have you been in leadership? Explain the type of leadership.

This question will add more substance to question 6 in terms of level and type of leadership exposure in question 3. Often individuals are leaders and unaware also that others may have been a leader for years but have no quality training, so the question

will uncover those who are leaders. This is a confirmation question for the candidate to evaluate 12 women from the 120 women participating in the survey.

9. In the 8-week program, what is it that you are expected to learn during this mentoring process?

APPENDIX D

MANAGEMENT OF ENERGY WELLBEING QUESTIONNAIRE

Management of Energy. . . a Wellbeing Questionnaire

Please check the statements below that are *true* for you currently. Take 3-4 minutes to complete.

Body

- ☐ I don't regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired.
- ☐ I frequently skip breakfast, or I settle for something that isn't nutritious.
- ☐ I don't work out enough (meaning cardiovascular training at least three times a week and strength training at least once a week).
- ☐ I don't take regular breaks during the day to truly renew and recharge, or I often eat lunch at my desk, if I eat it at all.

Emotions

- ☐ I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work, especially when work is demanding.
- ☐ I don't have enough time with my family and loved ones, and when I'm with them, I'm not always really with them.
- ☐ I have too little time for the activities that I most deeply enjoy.
- ☐ I don't stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to savor my accomplishments and blessings.

Mind

- ☐ I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I am easily distracted during the day, especially by e-mail.
- ☐ I spend much of my day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities with longer-term value and high leverage.
- ☐ I don't take enough time for reflection, strategizing, and creative thinking.
- ☐ I work in the evenings or on weekends, and I almost never take an e-mail-free vacation.

Spirit

- ☐ I don't spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most.
- ☐ There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy.
- ☐ My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by a strong, clear sense of my own purpose.
- ☐ I don't invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world.

_____ 's Self-Care Plan!

MIND

BODY

SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE

I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH

SPIRIT



Self Care Plan by Social Work Tech | Ignacio Pacheco

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Source/Author Unknown

APPENDIX E
LINKED PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT

LINKED® Personality Assessment

Circle the answers that describe how you react most often. Go with your first thought, be as honest as you can, and don't over think your answers. For best results, don't answer thinking, "Is this a good or bad choice?" Mark one answer per question.

- 1- You've been assigned a project to complete in two weeks. You
 - a - get it done right away, even if you have to stay up late.
 - b - procrastinate but finish well at the last minute.
 - c - have a challenge finishing as you want the project perfect.
 - d - take your time, finishing at an easy pace.

- 2 - Friends would describe you as
 - a - bold and to the point.
 - b - fun and entertaining.
 - c - witty and detail-oriented.
 - d - likable and easy going.

- 3 - You find yourself in a conversation with neighbors or coworkers. You
 - a - laugh sometimes and enjoy joining in.
 - b - listen and contribute only when needed.
 - c - might interrupt with a solution for most problems.
 - d - listen and offer encouragement.

- 4 - The most important thing to have in life is
 - a - peace.
 - b - perfection.
 - c - fun.
 - d - control.

- 5 - When it comes to friends, you
 - a - make friends easily.
 - b - have little need for friends.
 - c - make friends cautiously.
 - d - get along with everyone.

- 6 - When choosing a place to eat, you
 - a - act spontaneously.
 - b - change your mind often.
 - c - have particular places in mind.
 - d - don't have a preference.

- 7 - Your ideal weekend would include
 - a - traveling to a new place.
 - b - having quality time with your spouse or a friend.

- c - learning a new skill.
 - d - having a pajama day.
- 8 - When you are stressed, you
- a - find a quiet place to rest.
 - b - call a friend and go shopping.
 - c - get away to a spot where you're alone and can recharge.
 - d - exercise more.
- 9 - If you look in your closet you will see
- a - all the hangers turned the same way and clothes neatly hung.
 - b - bright colors and fun patterns.
 - c - trendy outfits with all pieces hanging together.
 - d - a lot of comfortable clothes.
- 10 - When your child is hurting, you
- a - cry with him or her.
 - b - wrap your arms around him or her in a big hug.
 - c - tell him or her to be strong and get back into life.
 - d - try to make him or her feel better by planning something fun.
- 11 - When you are in a crowd, you
- a - enjoy all your new best friends.
 - b - wish you could hurry up and get home and put your feet up.
 - c - retreat to the perimeter to talk to someone you already know.
 - d - work the crowd to identify contacts.
- 12 - People often say you are
- a - controlling.
 - b - fun-loving.
 - c - encouraging.
 - d - laid back.
- 13 - Driving to work, you see a man knock a lady over and flee. You would most likely
- a - call the police and jump to the lady's aid.
 - b - park the car, call police, and wait.
 - c - pass on by hoping she's okay.
 - d - ask if she is alright and text friends to tell what you saw.
- 14 - Getting on an elevator to go four floors, you
- a - waste no time in starting a conversation with those already on.
 - b - move to the back corner and hope the elevator is fast.
 - c - smile and stand quietly.
 - d - push the button for your floor and ask the others which floor they're on.

- 15 - When unexpected company knocks at your door, you
a - turn around and shout "Party!"
b - invite them in and immediately begin tidying up.
c - tell them it's good to see them, but you have a headache.
d - invite them in, control the short visit, then stand and bid them good-bye.
- 16 - While lying in the hammock by the lake, you
a - take a nap easily.
b - make a checklist for errands.
c - invite a friend to join you.
d - have a hard time just lying there.
- 17 - Your parents are coming for a visit. You
a - rush around making sure everything is in place and clean.
b - brief the family on how to act and what to do.
c - decide the house is clean enough.
d - call all the relatives letting them know about the visit.
- 18 - When given the choice you prefer
a - to lead.
b - to serve.
c - to research.
d - to entertain.
- 19 - When you are sad, you
a - read a book.
b - tell a friend.
c - work on a project.
d - take a nap.
- 20 - When given the opportunity to voice your opinion
a - you speak right up.
b - give your opinion and more.
c - choose your words carefully.
d - you say very few words.
- 21 - If you were a piece of a puzzle, you would be
a - the corners.
b - the bright flowers.
c - the straight edges.
d - the background.
- 22 - In life, you tend to be
a - playful.
b - purposeful.

- c - powerful.
 - d - peaceful.
- 23 - Your car of choice would be
- a - economical and safe.
 - b - comfortable and easy to maintain.
 - c - sporty and fun.
 - d - stylish and dependable.
- 24 - You are drawn to
- a - things done the right way.
 - b - things done the fast way.
 - c - things done the easy way.
 - d - things done the fun way.
- 25 - Which word describes you best at home?
- a - competitive
 - b - cautious
 - c - committed
 - d - carefree
- 26 - Your co-workers describe you as
- a - results-oriented
 - b - service-oriented
 - c - detail-oriented
 - d - pleasure-oriented

Linking Your Chain

This is your first step in discovering more about who you are. How exciting!

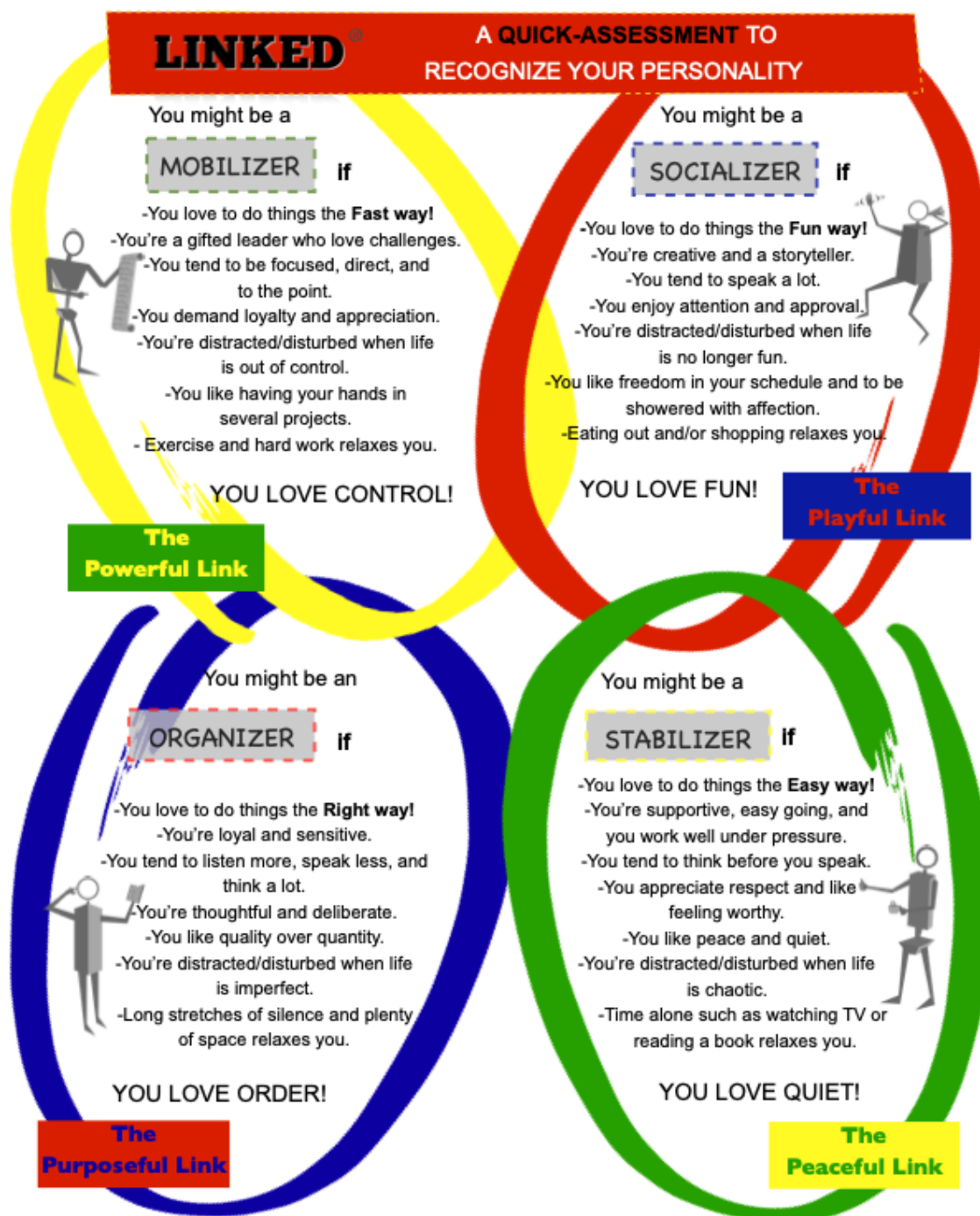
1. Transfer your answers to the scoring key. Simply look at the letter you marked in the assessment and circle it in the appropriate column.
2. Add the total number circled in each column and enter it at the bottom of the key.
3. Circle the column with the highest number. That is your dominant personality.
4. Many people find that another personality column has a fairly high number. For instance, your score may be 14 in the Mobilizer column, 8 in the Organizer column, and 2 in both the Stabilizer and the Socializer columns. This means you are a strong Mobilizer but also have quite a few Organizer tendencies. It also means that you are not likely to demonstrate many of the Stabilizer or Socializer tendencies.

The LINKED® quick guides provide you with in-depth information on all of the personalities and discuss ways to use your strengths and overcome your weaknesses to connect best with those around you.

For more information contact

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APPENDIX F

MENTORING PERSONALITY EVALUATION

Mentoring Personality Evaluation

Name Karynthia Phillips

Date: 3/4/21

Your feedback is vital to our next steps in the Linked® Coach Certification development process. As we prepare to move into the official launch of this certification, your candid insights, suggestions, and areas for improvement are essential.

Record your opinion to the course by responding to the following questions. Add comments to clarify a rating.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SA = You strongly agree with the statement. ▪ A = You agree with the statement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ D = You generally agree with the statement. ▪ SD = You strongly agree with the statement. |
|--|--|

1. The techniques I learned in this course will be helpful in my (circle all that apply):

Life Ministry Job / Business Personal Relationships Other
(specify below): _____

Comments:

All the above

2. I see opportunity to introduce LINKED® Workshops or Classes to: (circle all that apply to you)

School In-Service Meetings PTA/School Associations Business
Environments Retreats Marriage Groups

Parenting Groups Key Notes Conferences Pre-Marital Coaching
Other (specify below): _____

Comments:

Helpful for women in leadership or women ministries

3. The materials used in the pre-work helped prepare me for success prior to the online course.

SA A D SD

Comments:

The overall expectation /process was not clear.

4. The course length was appropriate for the content covered.

SA A D SD

Comments:

5. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 the lowest and 10 the highest score, how well did the Zoom experience work for you?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Comments:

Face to face would have been better

6. The course provided an appropriate balance of spiritual and practical information (LINKED content and presentation/facilitation skills).

SA A D SD

Comments:

7. The course workbook was a valuable job aid both in the online course and for use following the course as a reference.

SA A D SD

Comment:

8. I would recommend this course to others.

SA A D SD

Comment:

For items 9-13, provide specific examples or comments: *(you may use a separate piece of paper if preferred.)*

- 9. What areas (topics, concepts, skills, etc.) Would you like to have covered in more depth?**

The actual process of interpreting the assessment.

- 10. Describe one important skill, concept, or insight you learned in this course. What makes this one of the most valuable learning take-aways?**

Demonstrating intentional empathy.

- 11. What would you say if asked, “Why should I consider attending this course?”**

The course will help you see yourself differently in relationship to others in terms of how I will respond to others.

- 12. What suggestions and/or ideas might you share to help us improve this course?**

Expectation clear to the point and maybe more time to prepare for presentation.

- 13. Other Comments:**

Demonstrate cultural sensitivity with presentation of the candidates.

APPENDIX G
SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

Spiritual Gifts Inventory, Short Form

A method to help you discover your gifts. Check the items which best describe you.

1. _____ I prefer ministering by myself rather than in a group. G
2. _____ People often say I am impulsive and direct. A
3. _____ My financial resources are above average. A
4. _____ I like to counsel people on a short-term basis. D
5. _____ I am a task-oriented person. G
6. _____ I love directing other people's work. B
7. _____ It's natural for me to show kindness to people. E
8. _____ People learn easily from me. C
9. _____ I can be very persuasive. F
10. _____ More than 10 percent of my income goes for Christian causes. A
11. _____ People often follow my advice. D
12. _____ I normally use several books in lesson preparation. C
13. _____ I like to recruit and lead people. B
14. _____ One-on-one relationships are important to me. E
15. _____ I possess a variety of talents and abilities. G
16. _____ I want to measure everything by God's Word. F
17. _____ Material possessions don't mean much to me. A
18. _____ Discouraged people are encouraged by my words. D
19. _____ Being accurate and truthful are important to me. C
20. _____ I love the challenge of accomplishing an organization goal. G
21. _____ Other people's spiritual welfare genuinely concerns me. D
22. _____ I usually make quick decisions. F
23. _____ I look for ways to help the unfortunate and downtrodden. E
24. _____ Criticism doesn't bother me. C
25. _____ I often volunteer my time and talents to worthwhile causes. G
26. _____ I am usually self-confident. B
27. _____ I don't expect repayment for favors I do for others. E
28. _____ I enjoy being responsible for the success of the group. B
29. _____ When a question about truth comes up, I am normally right. F
30. _____ Deadlines challenge me, and I usually meet them on time. B
31. _____ People in pain are comforted by my presence. D

Total your checks: A _____, B _____, C _____, D _____, E _____, F _____, G _____
 Recording a 3, 4, or 5 after a letter indicates a Spiritual Gift.

EXPLANATION

For Short Spiritual Gifts Inventory

A. GIVING

You contribute material resources and do God's work with liberality and cheerfulness. You contribute sacrificially, motivate others, and don't shun pressure or publicity. Romans 12:13 – "Share with God's people."

B. ADMINISTRATION

You lead and communicate in such a way that people work harmoniously to reach goals for God's purpose. You enjoy being a leader and can endure adverse reaction to get the job done. You enjoy seeing tasks complete; are able to set guidelines, schedules, and policies; and can delegate to get the work done. Romans 12:14 – "Bless those who persecute you."

C. TEACHING

You communicate the truth with obvious results. You believe your gift is foundational and work systematically and with accuracy. Romans 12:11 – "Keep spiritual fervor."

D. EXHORTATION

You minister by giving comfort, consolation, and encouragement so people feel helped and healed. Problems are only challenges, and you are drawn to those seeking spiritual growth. You can share personal failures to prompt others to talk. Learning and teaching practical information is your desire. Romans 12:12 – "Joyful, patient and faithful."

E. MERCY

You feel compassion for those who are suffering and perform deeds to reflect God's love. You are naturally drawn to hurting people, sensitive, giving, loving and desire healing. Romans 12:15-16 – "Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with mourners, live in harmony."

F. PROPHECY

The goal of those who have the gift of prophecy is to bring persons face to face with God. You discern, reveal motives and actions, have strong convictions and a need to express them. Impulsive, direct, and persuasive, you normally are a strong person. Romans 12:9 – "Love must be sincere, hate evil, cling to good."

G. SERVING

You identify and meet the needs of others using personal as well as other resources. You see needs and enjoy responding. You work best short-term and alone (do it now and quickly). You possess endurance and stamina and have a tendency to do too much. Romans 12:10 – "Be devoted, honor one another."

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Inventory can be found in workbook: *Discovering Our Place in God's World* and in *Development of Church Officers in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church* by Chris Joiner)

APPENDIX H

MENTORING PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

MENTORING PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Preliminary Survey Question will be placed on the electronic questionnaire maker Survey Monkey and emailed out. Each recipient will be given the option to identify themselves if they wish.

1. Have you ever considered contracting a mentor to hone skills in ministerial or business leadership?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Never considered

2. The spiritual direction from your spiritual mother/ father is it effective for promotion professional development, and sustainability in pastoral ministry or business?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Never talked about those topics

3. If you were given the opportunity to acquire a mentor, would you prefer?

- A. Older female
- B. Same age female
- C. Older male
- D. Same age male

4. Does it matter the race of the mentor?

- A. Prefer same race (Cultural)
- B. Race (Cultural) does not matter
- C. Explain why or why not?

5. If you were offered a free six-week mentor, what topics would you like to discuss:

(Check all that are of interest)

- How to apply for pastorate position.

- How to decline or accept an assignment
- How to mentor women in leadership
- Self-discovery to obtain clarity of vision.
- Learn to identify personal theology.
- Experience a ministry cohort with women of same race.
- Acquire self-care action steps.
- Understand how to leverage my gifts and personality type in leadership.
- Identify if I am a traditional or nontraditional ministry and possibilities for the best use of my call
- How do you balance your home, church, and social life as single or married woman
- How to prevent, identify or remedy burnout

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